Problems of COMMUNISM

Evolution in Communism

RAYMOND ARON
SIDNEY HOOK

Soviet Economic Reform

ALEC NOVE

Literary Revival in Poland

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1917-1957: An Historical Perspective

THE GLORY AND THE HORROR of the October Revolution of 1917 have so often been described, in language varying from true literature to the slogans of party propagandists, that it is hard to believe anything new or worthwhile can ever be said of it again. But though Soviet historians profess to see in the October Revolution the culmination of the whole history of mankind, the product of the ineluctable process of destiny, the dramatic entry of one nation into a stage of human development through which all other nations are doomed to pass in their own turn—to the western non-Marxist this claim seems best summed up in Castlereagh's comment on Tsar Alexander I's Holy Alliance, "a sublime piece of mysticism and nonsense."

The October Revolution was a unique event, produced essentially by two unique historical factors. One was the chaos to which the vast Russian Empire had been reduced by war, by the incompetence of its last Tsar, and by the inability of the provisional government—through little fault of its own—to arrest the disintegration of the state machine. The second factor was the genius of Lenin, his indomitable will to power, his conviction that his political aims embodied the purposes of history, and his ability to command and to infuse with his own energy, his small band of followers.

Subsequent reality always falls short of the utopian longings generated during great crises. It would therefore be both unfair and misleading to compare the Russia of Khrushchev with the hopes of October 1917. There is also little advantage in comparing the modern Soviet regime with the short-lived democratic order proclaimed by the earlier February Revolution. This order was after all little more than a promise. No doubt the men of February had nobler intentions than any who had or have since been called to rule in Russia. But intentions were of little help in the summer of 1917. These men could have survived only by being as ruthless as their rivals—in short, by eliminating their rivals before attempting to put their intentions into practice. They chose instead to remain true to their belief that persuasion was preferable to force, and Lenin was the gainer.

If we wish, in 1957, to make a meaningful comparison, to ask how much has been achieved in Russia under the Bolsheviks, whether the same or more could have been achieved without them, and whether the price paid by the Russian people and by the whole human race for Lenin's triumph is too high or not—then we must take as the basis of our comparison, not the dreams of October or the speeches of February to October, but the last working political and social regime that Russia had before the catastrophe. This is, of course, the quasi-constitutional system established as a result of the unsuccessful revolution of 1905 and the reaction which followed it—the system associated with the name of Prime Minister P. A. Stolypin. This system can be judged on the basis of eight years of comparatively "normal" conditions, from the summer of 1906 to the summer of 1914. The comparison may best be made in two main fields—on the one hand, the progress of civil, intellectual and political liberties; on the other, the development of social classes.

STOLYPIN'S rule is depicted by Soviet historians as one of bloodthirsty reaction. It is true that he hanged some hundreds of revolutionaries and insurgent peasants in his first months of power and that he dissolved the Second Duma, replacing the earlier franchise law providing for almost universal suffrage by one which favored the rich against the poor and the Russian 45 percent of the population against the non-Russian 55 percent. In the later Dumas elected under Stolypin's restrictive franchise, however, the Social Democrats, Socialist Revolutionaries and other Populist groups still were represented. Political parties were numerous and could organize their branches and hold meetings. There was a wide variety of political newspapers and periodicals. Individual issues were confiscated by the police if they incited violence or rebellion, but no attempt was

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made to prevent the expression of Marxist, Populist or radical ideas. Book publication was still more free; censorship of the arts and of literature was no stricter than in any contemporary western country. An independent judiciary had already been introduced in the 1860's but had had to fight a long struggle against encroachments by the administrative authorities. This struggle was still being fought under Stolypin. But once the immediate aftermath of the 1905-1906 violence was past, it was the law which gained ground, and arbitrary powers which declined.

The Russia of Khrushchev presents a very different picture. Stolypin's police tactics have long since been dwarfed by the Bolsheviks' methods of liquidating opponents. In the Soviet Union there is no freedom of association, of political assembly, of the press or of book publication. Nor is the judiciary independent: both judges and procurators are subject to the overriding will of the party. In the field of literature, the relaxation of regime controls in recent years can be seen in better perspective when contrasted with the situation under Stolypin. Dudintsev's widely discussed novel *Not by Bread Alone,* despite its criticism of the Communist ruling bureaucracy, was published in the Moscow literary magazine *Novy Mir* in the fall of 1956 and has since been allowed to appear in book form, though in a far smaller edition than was originally planned or is customary for the huge Russian book trade. To be sure, the fact that such a work could be published and its author escape anything worse—at least to date—than verbal attack by party spokesmen, represents noteworthy "progress" by comparison with the period of Stalin's autocracy, when no such criticisms could have appeared in print and any one who made them orally would have gone to a labor camp or even been shot. But western journalists who acclaim this as "liberalization" would do well to bear in mind that even under Tsar Nicholas I, and much more so in the Russia of 1910, fierce public criticism of bureaucratic mismanagement and corruption was possible. Moreover, Khrushchev has made it plain that no more writings like Dudintsev's will be tolerated.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN totalitarianism (which makes unlimited claims on both the personal and public life of the citizen, seeks to atomize society, and tries to prevent any individual associations not initiated and controlled by its officials) and mere dictatorship (which confines its claims to public life, and merely tells its subjects what they may *not* do) is becoming familiar in the West. The difference between Russia's political condition under Khrushchev and Stolypin can be summarized as the difference between a totalitarian system and a semi-constitutional regime in which elements of dictatorship still remained but were steadily decreasing.

If we compare the social structures of Khrushchev's and Stolypin's Russia, the differences appear striking enough. But their nature is more complex than a mere first glance would suggest.

The Bolsheviks divided among the peasants the large landed estates, which in 1914 occupied about 20% of the cultivable land of European Russia—a considerable portion, but not, as western writers so often loosely assert, "most of the land". Within little more than a decade, however, the peasants were deprived of these gains and also of the farms they had possessed before the Revolution. All they kept were tiny private plots. Forced into "collective farms", they were compelled to divide their time between their own and the collective lands. This situation recalls that which existed under serfdom before 1861. Like the serf-owning landlords of old Russia, the present-day magnates of the Soviet countryside (*raikom* party secretaries for MTS zones and managers of amalgamated collective farms) use the power at their command to make the peasants work for the collective at the expense of their own plots. Thus, from the standpoint of the peasant's control over land and crops, the Soviet Union of 1957, compared to the Russia of Stolypin, with its policies for strengthening independent peasant farming, represents, not progress, but a reversion to the dark past.

SOVIET industrial achievements are enormous. But here, too, it is foolish to forget what already had been accomplished in the Stolypin era. Production of coal in southern Russia more than doubled between 1900 and 1913; so did the production of iron ore between 1905 and 1913, while pig iron output almost doubled during this same period. During the First World War there were further industrial gains. Then followed years of civil war, famine and dispersion of the population. When industrial construction began again in the late 1920's, the foundations were narrower and less solid than in 1914. Miracles were performed at fantastic speed, but also at fantastic human cost and producing goods of fantastically low quality. The first two Five-Year Plans, moreover, brought about serious imbalances and distortions in economic growth. Soviet industry has now recovered from most of these, but one still wonders whether, if there had been no civil war, no forced collectivization of agriculture, and no herding of hundreds of thousands of peasant boys into the factories and construction projects of the 1930's, the end results might not have been better. Without Lenin's revolution of 1917 and Stalin's of 1929, there might have been a slower rate of industrial growth,

(*) [2] See 'National Economy of the U.S.S.R.'

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but the progress achieved in the end might well have been just as great, with the added benefit of a more balanced and firmer economic structure.

A comparison of the status of the working class in the pre-revolutionary period and today is also revealing. In 1906 the workers obtained the right to organize labor unions, but not the right to strike. Under Khrushchev, too, there is no right to strike. The labor unions of the earlier period did not have much power, it is true, but neither do their successors of today, and those of 1906 at least had leaders elected by the members, whereas the Soviet union bosses are appointed by the Communist party. Under Stolypin industrial workers were growing in numbers, and the proportion of skilled to unskilled was increasing fast. Russia was in transition from the first stage of industrialisation—in which workers are materially exploited and socially uprooted—to the second state—in which their standard of living improves and they find a firm, if not yet adequate, place in a new urban society. In this respect she was following in the footsteps of other industrial countries—Britain, the United States, Germany. Admittedly she still had a long way to go, but already by 1914 the workers were making their pressure felt.

During the first year of the war, the influence of the workers increased. But defeat, revolution, civil war and famine almost destroyed the class that had existed in 1914. An industrial working class had to be built up again almost from nothing. The workers of the First Five-Year Plan were as much an exploited and uprooted proletariat as the workers of industrial England at the end of the 18th century, and certainly they were more ruthlessly dragooned by their masters. In the following decades their level of skill and education enormously increased, and recently their living standards have gone up too. Today no one would deny that the Russian working class is far in advance of that of Stolypin's day. But whether it is in advance of the working class that Russia would have had if, in the past 40 years, there had been no civil war, no Bolshevik dictatorship, no Stalinist revolution, is another question. Certainly the Soviet workers today have no more political power than their predecessors under Stolypin. But certainly, too, their pressure for reform is being felt. Not the least interesting question for the Soviet future is how long can the rulers ignore this pressure?

The Soviet regime boasts that it destroyed the power of the capitalists. But here, too, reality is more complex than propaganda. Before 1917 capitalists had very little power in Russia: for the most part they were willing to follow the lead of the bureaucrats who ruled the country and who assured them of large profits and lucrative government contracts. There was very little of what could be called a bourgeoisie. The three main elements which in the West compose a bourgeoisie—businessmen, government servants and the free professions—lived, on the whole, apart from each other, and none of the three had an outlook that could reasonably be termed bourgeois. All three suffered heavily under Lenin. But a new phase began with Stalin's forced industrialization of 1929. Industrial revolutions create social classes, regardless of the intentions of the initiators—indeed, regardless of whether there are conscious initiators or not. Soviet experience since 1929 is no exception. The privileged strata of contemporary Soviet society are the product of this vast process, constituting what is, in fact, nothing less than a "state bourgeoisie." Three points, in particular, should be stressed. The first is that the higher level of these strata enjoy material privileges comparable with any which existed under Stolypin. The second is that, whereas wealth, social status and political power were to some extent separated from each other in the old Russia, meeting only at the apex of the pyramid—that is, in the immediate entourage of the Tsar—in the Soviet Union they are concentrated largely in the same hands. True, there are actual and potential causes of conflict within the privileged strata, and there is also a certain basic incompatibility between the very existence of these strata and the Communist Party. But from the viewpoint of the Soviet masses, the upper class is more monolithic and more formidable than the bureaucratic-noble ruling class of Stolypin's Russia. The third point is that the new upper class has many of the most distasteful features which characterized the bourgeoisie in European countries during the early stages of capitalism—e.g., moral contempt for those less rich or less influential than the bourgeois themselves, aggressive bad taste in the arts, prudish self-righteousness and censorious interference in the private morals of others, and a general obsession with materialistic values in the narrowest and most sordid sense. Of the great historic virtues of the bourgeoisie of Europe, there is little sign. In short, Russia under Khrushchev, no less than Russia under Stolypin, has definite privileged strata with great power. The most significant difference is that the ruling class of 1957 is more arrogant and less cultured than that of 1914.

CARRIED OUT in the name of justice and freedom, the October Revolution appealed to profound utopian longings and mobilized immense resources of human courage—and of cruelty. But the reality of 1957 bears little resemblance to the dreams of 1917. What, then, has become of the great revolutionary myth?

Paradoxically, it is still very much alive. Soviet Russia is a totalitarian despotism based on the exploitation of

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subject classes and subject nations. Nevertheless, in many lands beyond its borders, where men and women suffer from real or fancied social or national oppression, or where they are motivated by hatred and envy, the mythical image of the Soviet Union as the fatherland of the toilers and patriarch of a happy family of equal brother nations continues to exert a strong attraction and to inspire idealistic, if deluded hope.

There is plenty of class oppression left in the world. Italian and French workers have bitter grievances, and they express them by electing Communists to parliament and to leading posts in their labor unions. Whether the working classes of Italy and France are truly a revolutionary force is highly doubtful, but at least they are still drawn by the old revolutionary slogans, a fact from which the Soviet leaders profit. There are other countries in which the contrasts between the wealthy few and the masses of workers, especially agricultural workers, are far more terrifying. Such are Persia, Arabia, large parts of South America, and sections of India. Here, the class struggle is no empty slogan.

NEVERTHELESS, it is a deeply significant fact that recent instances of workers rising against oppression occurred in places where it was claimed that the working masses were happily and confidently building socialism under the leadership of the Communist Party—in East Berlin, Plzen, Poznan and Budapest. Indeed, the Hungarian Revolution combined aspects of three separate stages of the history of the Russian revolutionary movement. The leading role of the Hungarian intellectuals and students recalled events in Russia in the 1870's and again at the turn of the century. The defection of the army to the side of the crowds in the streets repeated the pattern of the February Revolution of 1917. The revolutionary workers' councils of Budapest were replicas of the Petersburg soviets of 1907 and 1917.

But in 1957 class hatreds have less explosive potential than the hatreds of nationalism, and here the leaders of world communism have shown themselves able manipulators. Nationalistic enmities, of course, have their origins far back in the past and were aggravated by the admitted mistakes and crimes of the European imperial governments. Today, however, it is Soviet political warfare which is most assiduous and systematic in developing these hatreds in order to serve the world power interests of the Soviet Union.

The Soviet leaders naturally disclaim that they are themselves nationalists or imperialists. From the beginning, the Bolsheviks rejected nationalism. They proclaimed themselves champions of self-determination for all and contended that all nationalist discrimination, indeed all national differences, would disappear in the socialist society. In practice, however, the Soviet regime developed its own supra-nationalist form of imperialism, of which the Georgians, Uzbeks and other national and racial minorities in the USSR are the unwilling victims. At the same time, in many parts of the world Soviet propaganda has been increasingly channeled into the calculated inflammation of nationalist antagonisms. A case in point is the Middle East, where the Communists are finding useful allies in the most obscurantist and chauvinistic nationalist movements.

One wonders what Lenin, who hated nationalism, would have thought of all this. But Lenin's greatest hatred was always for liberalism, and in this respect Khrushchev can surely claim the master's approval for his unremitting efforts to suppress liberal freedom through the worldwide expansion of Communist power. For his own part, Khrushchev certainly believes himself a true disciple of Lenin. He rose to his present eminence and power by virtue of his control of the Communist Party apparatus, which he has consistently striven to revitalize. In the last years of Stalin's life the party had become merely one of the several instruments of power all manipulated by the omnipotent dictator. Now, under Khrushchev, it is to be once more the true center of political and social life, the source of all power. For this purpose the purity and supremacy of Communist ideology must be reasserted, not only within the Soviet Union but throughout the world Communist movement. Khrushchev is a machine politician, but he is also the head of an oecumenical church.

Today, 40 years after the October Revolution, the idealism and humanitarian fervor of its authors have vanished leaving only a dogma empty of real meaning but still used as a tool by the most ruthless totalitarian regime of our time.

HUGH SETON-WATSON

(Mr. Seton-Watson is a distinguished British historian, author of *The Decline of Imperial Russia* (Praeger, N.Y., 1953) and numerous other works.)

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The Evolution of Communism

EDITOR'S NOTE: With the following articles, *Problems of Communism* continues its discussion of basic trends and developments in the Communist world since Stalin's death. Mr. Aron's essay concerns itself with the present and predictable effects of economic development on the political and social structure of the USSR as well as on the revolutionary elan of bolshevism. It is based on a paper read by the author at the symposium on "Changes in Soviet Society," sponsored by St. Anthony's College, Oxford University, in association with the Congress for Cultural Freedom, and held at Oxford in June of 1957. Mr. Hook on the other hand, examines the current ideological diversity within the Soviet bloc for clues to possible institutional changes in the future. For previous contributions to this series, the reader is referred to "The Psychology of Soviet Foreign Policy," by Robert C. Tucker, and "Will Russia 'Debolshevize'?", by David S. Anine, in the May-June (No. 4, 1957) issue of this journal.

Soviet Society in Transition

By Raymond Aron

THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT of Soviet society is manifestly one of the most crucial issues under investigation by social scientists today. Studies in this field are necessarily speculative not only for the obvious reason that they deal with future unknowns but because there has been so little opportunity for outsiders to familiarize themselves with the Soviet-Russian reality. Social scientists face a further difficulty in that there are several possible—and somewhat incompatible—approaches, or bases, for an interpretation of Soviet society.

Studies to date have proceeded along three principal avenues of approach, investigating Soviet society, first, as an industrial civilization; second, as a totalitarian system (dealt with as a unique phenomenon without historical precedent); third, as the successor to Tsarist Russia (with stress laid on aspects of cultural continuity between past and present). Any of these conceptual approaches can lead to confusion in attempts to predict the Soviet future. In the first instance, little is known as yet about the laws of economic development in a system of the Soviet type. Analyses stressing the totalitarian aspect often suffer for lack of a clear definition of totalitarianism itself (*e.g.*, does it date back to Lenin or just to Stalin?). As for the continuity approach, stress on the constant factors in Russian culture as a key to the future can too easily lead to underestimation or disregard of the impact of economic and political changes.

Synthesizing the issues implied by these three approaches, the basic question to be answered may be phrased: To what extent, if any, will the development of industrial civilization bring about an evolution of the Soviet totalitarian regime and of the social forms inherited from the past? What direction will this evolution take? Some observers, in attempting to answer this question, have put forward theses based on one or another of the above schemes of interpretation in virtual disregard of the issues raised by the others.

Two such theses are worth mention as categorical and contradictory extremes of opinion; both, in this writer's

Mr. Aron is a distinguished French journalist and political scientist, Professor of Sociology at the Sorbonne and author of many works; his latest volume, published in translation from the French, is *The Opium of the Intellectuals* (London: Secker and Warburg), 1957.

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view, are invalid. One asserts that the stupendous development of productive forces in the Soviet Union will pave the way to democracy; the other, that the totalitarian regime is invulnerable to economic forces.

Extremist Theories

The first of these has been expounded in particularly crude terms by Mr. Isaac Deutscher.[1] His formulation lends itself to numerous objections, raised so often already that they can be dealt with briefly here. The explanation that terrorism and ideological orthodoxy are determined solely by the needs of primary accumulation or of the Five-Year Plans runs up against the incontrovertible fact that the great purge of 1936-38 took place after the first Plan had already been carried out and the collectivization of agriculture completed. The terror that accompanied the latter may, at a stretch, be attributed to economic "necessities," but this explanation cannot apply to the great purge, during which millions of real and imagined opponents, faithful Bolsheviks and even Stalinists were thrown into prison.

The tremendous development of Soviet productive forces, on which neo-Marxists always dwell as a portent of the better life to come, is of course no fiction. By and large, however, it applies only to heavy industry. The lot of the Soviet citizenry has remained relatively unaffected, since the living standard is determined not by *per capita* production but by the value of goods intended for consumption by individuals. Considering additionally the lag in agricultural output, it is unlikely that the Soviet planners can greatly increase the purchasing power of the population in the foreseeable future.

In any thesis on the Soviet future, the meaning of the word "democracy" is crucial. If by democracy is meant the organized competition of parties—as it seems to in Deutscher's formulation—then there is no obvious connection between democracy and economic progress. But it is absurd to insist on rigid and unalterable concepts of democracy in its Western form (characterized by multi-party systems, legislative representation, intellectual liberties, *etc.*) as opposed to totalitarianism (characterized by the single party, ideological terrorism, police controls, *etc.*). Neither Western democracy nor Stalinist totalitarianism can be considered as fixed entities, as "historic atoms" which cannot be transmuted. Thus, if it is illogical to assert that totalitarianism will develop into full-fledged democracy with the development of productive forces, it is just as illogical to exclude dogmatically a softening up of totalitarianism.

This is the weakness of the second theory, opposite to Mr. Deutscher's, which asserts that totalitarianism is invulnerable to outside forces. It is usually posited as part of a political and almost metaphysical interpretation of totalitarianism, conceived of as a disease which is liable to infect any modern society—even though, so far, only Russia and Germany have experienced it in "pure" form. Its proponents argue that although totalitarianism is favored by certain economic and social circumstances, it is essentially something political and ideological. It is supposed to be the outcome of an obsessive drive of a group of people bent on shaping society according to their own ideology. The power of a single party, ideological orthodoxy, police terror, the creation of a world of superimposed conventional meanings, with no reference to the real world and yet forced on the masses as something truer than reality—all these features, we are told, are linked together and constitute the characteristics of a global, or self-contained, phenomenon—a phenomenon which has emerged and will eventually disappear, but which it would be idle to expect to return to normality by gradual stages.

In this definition of totalitarianism, three of the above features are essential: ideological orthodoxy, police terror, and world-wide victory or else apocalyptic collapse. These three elements are said to be closely linked. The will to set up an arbitrary and often absurd ideology as The Truth necessitates the recourse to police inquisition, which is used for hunting not only enemies, but also heretics. The truth of the ideology can triumph only when it is no longer rejected by anybody. So long as there is opposition anywhere, communism will not be entirely true, because its truth will still clash with reality, and its complete truth depends on its universal application. Thus communism is in a constant state of war with unbelievers both inside and outside its borders. The greater the progress, the more it is impelled to struggle, for nothing has been achieved so long as something still remains to be done. This line of analysis affords an explanation for the great purge having descended upon Soviet society after the completion of rural collectivization; the latter is viewed not as an economic and rational—however ruthless—measure, but as the expression of a policy which is *alien* to economic rationalism, and is intelligible only in terms of an ideological and emotional logic.

This kind of interpretation, which Hannah Arendt has developed with great skills, seems to me to be dangerous. It amounts to creating a certain ideal type, a kind of essence of totalitarianism—and to assuming, thereupon, that the regime, both in the present and in the future, must conform to this type or this essence. If the Soviets behaved as "perfect" totalitarians, as Miss

[1] See Leon Gouré's review of Deutscher's *Russia in Transition* (New York: Howard McCann, Inc., 1957) in this issue.

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Arendt understands the word, then it is quite true that we could expect no normalization or evolution of the Soviet regime. The real question is, however, whether the regime has even been completely totalitarian, whether the "essense" has not simply been created by theorists like Miss Arendt on the strength of certain historically-observed and historically-explicable phenomena. The Soviet regime *became* totalitarian by degrees, under the influence of certain circumstances. Why, then, could it not cease to be totalitarian, or become less totalitarian, under the influence of other circumstances?

The Impact of Economic Development

Once the extremes of the neo-Marxist and the totalitarian theory have been rejected, it must be decided what either of them can contribute to a logical assessment of the Soviet future. What transformations, social and economic, are brought about by the development of productive forces? What is the likely effect of these transformations on the political regime? To what extent is totalitarianism (or certain totalitarian elements) inseparable from the regime, regardless of economic progress?

There are at least three important social and economic consequences of the development of productive forces. The first is a rise in the general level of culture and the creation and development of an intelligentsia, whose broad base—in addition to traditional cultural and professional elements—is the swelling ranks of technical and managerial specialists who man the economy. It is as true for the Soviet Union as for the West that modern industry requires a higher proportion of technicians and specialized "cadres" than in the past, and Soviet statistics show a steady increase in the proportion of intelligentsia to the whole working population.

Even outside this intelligentsia with its higher-level specialization, the priority given to production and to productivity is bound to encourage the spread of specialized training and of technical education. More than half the Soviet labor force is at present employed in industry or its auxiliary services, and more than half the population is urban. This urban population can read and write, and it is no longer as cowed—or as malleable—as it was in the early years of Stalin's reign.

The second consequence of industrial development, closely related to the first, is an increase in the economic wants and demands of the population. In the Soviet Union, the development of productive forces has not been accompanied by a corresponding rise in the standard of living of the masses. The concentration of capital investments in heavy industry, the failures in agriculture, and the housing shortage have meant that the average citizen is worse housed, worse fed and less well-dressed than the average citizen of the West, even in some of the less prosperous countries. In recent years, however, there has been some improvement in material conditions, and various pressures have led the regime to pay some limited deference to consumer needs. The indications are that this limited satisfaction of certain wants has whetted the population's appetite for more goods. In particular, the intelligentsia has shown increasing eagerness to acquire commodities typical of the way of life of the Western bourgeois (durable consumer goods, automobiles, refrigerators, *etc.*).

The third consequence of developing productive forces is a trend toward a more rational economy. Over the last thirty years, the Soviet economy has become not only more powerful but technologically far more complex. To what extent and how long the crude planning methods of the first Five-Year Plans can continue to be applied is a highly complicated and controversial issue. Yet the general direction of evolution seems fairly clear to this writer. As shortages become less severe, the consumers' choice will tend to be of growing importance to the market. Technological complexity will strengthen the managerial class at the expense of the ideologists and the militants, at any rate on the enterprise level, if not on the state level. The decentralization of industrial administration, in reinforcing the managerial elements, should reduce the part played by fear and coercion in the Soviet management of an industrial society.

Stabilizing Forces in Soviet Society

While the rate at which any of these social and economic trends will develop is hard to foresee, certain political implications seem clear. Briefly, it is the writer's view that none of these trends—toward a higher cultural level, toward increasing popular demands, or toward a more rational economy—constitutes a threat to the basic organization of the Soviet state or society.

Apart from its peculiarly totalitarian features, Soviet society is essentially bureaucratic and hierarchical, just as was prerevolutionary Russian society. The reliance of an industrial society on a state bureaucracy with vested interests—under a system which prevents the formation of organized opinion or pressure through professional groups, genuine trade unions, or political parties—obviously creates a certain tendency toward stability. A further stabilizing factor is class mobilitity; since the intelligentsia is expanding with each generation, it can absorb the ablest children of the masses without the regime's having to resort to purge or to demotion of the children of the already privileged.

As noted above, there is bound to be some tension between the economic desires of the masses and the

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intelligentsia, on one hand, and the exigencies of regime policy on the other (requiring the continued priority of heavy industry). There is probably also a latent conflict between the desire for rationality and security on the part of the managerial and technocratic elements, and the desire for power and prestige on the part of the party men. But such conflicts do not imply any explosions or fundamental changes in the society.

In short, there is nothing to indicate that economic progress will force the ruling class, composed of party men and higher-level bureaucrats, to authorize the creation of rival forces—in the form of either parties or workers' trade unions. And there is nothing to indicate that such a challenge can come from below; neither the masses nor the intelligentsia have the means of overriding the ban on organized pressure groups. The leadership seems quite capable of maintaining the principle of the single hierarchy, of the single party, and of the legal *status quo* of the ruling bureaucracy. If any basic change is to take place, it will have to occur *within* the ruling elite—*i.e.,* inside the Communist Party.

Evolution and the Regime

What can be said, then, of the effects of progressing industrialization on the Communist regime itself, and specifically on those aspects of the regime which have come to be identified as "totalitarian." The question may be discussed under several heads: 1) Will the internal structure of the party undergo basic changes as a result of the spontaneous evolution of the economy and the society? 2) Will ideology continue, in the long run, to play the same role as it has in the past? 3) Is the movement still inspired by the same boundless ambition, by the same violence, or may it be expected eventually to rest content with what it is—that is, something less than universal?

The most crucial change in the party structure of recent years—the substitution of collective leadership for one-man dictatorship—is attributable to an historical event, to the death of an individual, rather than to the evolution of either the society or the regime. Nevertheless, the change was, in a way, logical. For the very nature of Stalin's power—or his misuse of it—dictated against the rise of a single successor. None of the memmers of the Presidium could face without anxiety the prospect of a repetition of the process whereby Stalin, little by little, had liquidated virtually all of the men who had once been his allies in the party leadership.

Some observers have held that Khrushchev's increasing domination of the ruling clique has already put an end to collective leadership. But Khrushchev has had to lean heavily on the support of allies to push through his policies, and in this sense group rule certainly continues. Acting as a group of leaders, the Presidium has appeared to be less indifferent to public demands, less able or less determined to carry out programs regardless of cost, than was Stalin with his unlimited personal power.

Whether further fundamental changes will take place in the structure and balance of power within the party is a matter of conjecture at this stage. However, it is worth noting that Khrushchev effected his purge of the so-called "anti-party" leaders last June through appeal to the Central Committee, over the objections of a majority of the Presidium. Before that time the Presidium appeared to be just as independent of the Central Committee as Stalin had been. Since the authority of the proletariat originally passed from the party to the Politburo (*i.e.,* Stalin) *through* the Central Committee, it is interesting to speculate on whether the reverse could take place. So far, there is no sign that any such basic shift in power is in the offing; if it were to occur, however, it would be directly attributable to the struggle for power rather than to broader forces of evolution.

The changeover from personal to collective leadership has been accompanied by the mitigation or abandonment of certain aspects of totalitarian rule. Perhaps the epitome of totalitarianism, certainly the feature most frequently mentioned, is the instrument of the purge, characterized by a combination of arbitrary police action (pragmatically unjustifiable), ideological terrorism and pure fantasy, defined by the inquisitor-theologians as more real than reality itself. The confession trials were the symbolic expression of this aspect of totalitarianism.

The collective leadership has renounced such excesses, and in doing so has revealed that it was never taken in by the mad logic of Stalinist ideological terrorism. At the same time, it may reasonably be objected that Khrushchev has not hesitated, on occasion, to employ it himself, as for instance when he has called Beria an "imperialist agent" or the Hungarian revolution a "counterrevolution." This leads us to perhaps the most crucial issue under consideration in this paper: that is the future role of ideology in the evolving Soviet society.

A Trend Toward Skepticism?

Communist ideology is based on a few simple ideas: the party *is* the proletariat; the seizure of power by the party is the *sine qua non* for the establishment of socialism. In places where the party has not taken over power, capitalism reigns and the masses are exploited. The inevitable culmination will be the extension throughout the world of regimes similar to the Soviet regime.

As is frequently pointed out, this orthodoxy has little

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connection with either Marx *or* reality. A society which has developed a great industrial complex side by side with a relentlessly low standard of living resembles what Marx called capitalism: a welfare state, albeit "capitalist," in which the additional resources acrruing from technical progress are used for the benefit of the masses, does not. The dialecticians have been obliged to place an arbitrary interpretation on facts, often at variance with the most obvious reality. The element of fantasy in the great trials is merely the supreme expression of this logic.

It is the writer's belief that Soviet society, with the improvement in its standard of living, its culture and its technology, not only is becoming economically more rational, but must in the long run lose its ideological fervor. As it makes further progress and becomes more stable, as its technical level draws closer to that of industrialized Western societies, so both its militants and the people at large are bound to incline to some degree of skepticism. They will come to admit certain incontestable facts, such as the plurality of methods of industrialization, the raising of the standard of living in the West, *etc.* As soon as Polish writers and educators were able to talk freely, they proceeded to admit these facts and to escape from the absurd logic of Communist ideology.

Orthodoxy vs. Rationality

Does this mean that the dialecticians and Soviet leaders will cease to profess their belief in the universal mission, in the coming, through socialism, of a classless society? Certainly they have shown no such tendency thus far, leading to still another question: is it possible for Soviet society, under its present organization and ideological restrictions, to go very far in the direction of *either* economic rationalism *or* the return to common sense? In both respects, regime attitudes are the source of basic contradictions in the society, in conflict with evolutionary trends.

In the matter of ideology, the Soviet leadership is faced with a profound dilemma: it is hard to maintain a faith, but it is harder still to do without one. The leadership could, without too much difficulty, abandon the absurd excesses of Stalinist orthodoxy. Stalin had not only made a nightmare farce out of the system of trials and confessions. He had set himself up as the supreme arbiter in matters of biology and linguistics. He had decreed what, in literature, painting or music, conformed or failed to conform to socialist doctrine. But this kind of madness was not inherent in the system. It was simple for his successors to restore to biologists the right to accept the laws of genetics or to grant novelists or composers a greater measure of freedom in their work.

The leaders cannot, however, permit freedom of discussion to extend to the dogma itself, since its premises, as we have seen, are patently absurd and at variance with the facts. They do not want to return to Stalinist excesses, but they cannot permit any challenge of the dogma, which legitimizes their rule and provides the justification for the perpetuation of communism. The compromise is an uneasy one. The leaders are constantly threatening to deprive the intellectuals of some of the freedom they have been granted, while the intellectuals, on their side, are continuously straining to transcend the limits which have been set for them.

IN POLAND and Hungary, where the desire for intellectual freedom was reinforced by the desire for national freedom, the conflict was resolved by explosion. In Hungary, order has been restored—but it is a foreign order, a police and military order. In Poland, a large measure of intellectual freedom still exists, but the dogma *as such* has vanished. The regime still pursues a socialist path of development, but the people are aware that it is simply one of many systems, that it offers no mystical guarantee of the welfare of the masses.

In the Soviet Union, on the other hand, the dogma is still intact; even though it is no longer as comprehensive or imperative as in the past, it continues to permeate the society. Certainly the leaders, judging by their pronouncements, still believe in the perpetuation of communism. They have not ceased to see themselves as engaged in a relentless struggle with the capitalist camp. Their outlook on the world is a long-term one, dominated by an over-simplified conception of good and evil.

This leads us to the second major contradiction in Soviet society—the obstacles which stand in the way of economic rationalization. From the inception of the Five-Year Plans, the objectives and methods of Soviet economic planning have been keyed to the concept of world struggle and to a desperate effort to catch up and surpass the level of industrialization in the capitalist countries. The system has the characteristics of what, in the West, would be a war economy: a rigid system of priorities has been established to ensure that the goals of heavy industry are achieved at all costs, the rest, if necessary, being sacrificed. When these goals have not been reached quickly enough, additional labor has been brought in from the countryside, and out-of-date industrial equipment has remained in operation.

Gradually however, transferable labor reserves have dwindled, with the result that increases have to come, in ever greater measure, from increased productivity. The problems of depreciation, renewal of equipment and economic planning are becoming more and more acute. Light industry and agriculture can no longer be sacrificed indiscriminately. The situation obviously demands

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an increasingly rational economy; but what kind of rationality is there in a planning system which concentrates not on satisfying demands but on the expansion of heavy industry, which refuses to great enterprises more than a bare minimum of independence, which continues to allocate the country's resources on the basis of decisions taken at the top, and which still aims at authoritarian administration in so large a sector of the system? The recent highly-touted reform of industrial administration, while transferring various executive functions to newly-created regional authorities, does not basically change these governing principles of the Soviet economic system.

As long as the Soviet leaders adhere to Stalinist principles, insist on the priority of heavy industry, and maintain disproportionate ratios between investment as *vs.* consumption and heavy industry as *vs.* agriculture and light industry, the Soviet economy will continue to bear the marks of an authoritarian, police regime. The return to a normal peacetime economy depends, in the final analysis, on the modification of the objectives fixed by the leaders—in short on their outlook.

All of the foregoing suggests two conclusions. It is not true to say that the Soviet regime is becoming increasingly totalitarian as the society comes to need totalitarianism less and less. Many of the worst aberrations of the regime appear to have stemmed from the abnormality of Stalin himself; and they have disappeared with him. But neither is it true to maintain that the main features of the economic system and of the political regime are attributable to Stalin exclusively; they are rooted as firmly in the views and methods of the men who helped build the USSR and who now rule it.

These conclusions, however, still do not answer the basic issues of the future; namely, *could* the regime change fundamentally without crumbling? And what freedoms is it capable of tolerating?

The Prospects for a Freer Society

When making a simplified analysis, a distinction can be drawn between three different kinds of freedom: firstly, what Montesquieu called security; secondly, the freedom the Hungarian intellectuals claimed, namely, the right to tell the truth about everything; and finally, Rousseau's freedom, participation in sovereignty, represented in the twentieth century by free elections and the multiparty political system.

Individual security is, as a rule, most favored by a parliamentary type of government. But many nondemocratic regimes give a fairly broad measure of security to those who do not engage in politics. The Tsarist regime, during its final period, interfered little with the life and liberty of citizens who minded their own business. In the Soviet Union, the insecurity of the Stalin era appears to have been greatly lessened by Stalin's successors. But as long as the Soviet regime continues to apply political sanctions in order to make the economy work, as long as it demands unquestioning respect for the dogma, the Soviet citizen will not be able to enjoy a true or stable measure of security.

To what extent could intellectuals and ordinary Soviet citizens be allowed to enjoy the second kind of freedom—to tell the truth about things, to exchange ideas, to visit the capitalist West, *etc?* In the writer's view, the regime could, without endangering its own safety, grant musicians, painters and writers, more freedoms than it does at present. But the word "could" here has a double application; the question is whether the leaders of the regime and the party could bring themselves to grant such freedoms. Again, as long as they believe in their dogma, they will not allow it to be discussed, and there will be a harness on truth. Yet even if they themselves become skeptical, would they admit it publicly? For the future this is a matter of speculation; for the present, they certainly would not dare to do so. For even though there may be a tendency in Russia to evolve into a semi-ideological technocracy, the dogma is still a vital factor in less-advanced Communist countries and is crucial in justifying the unity of the socialist camp. To hope that the dogma will fade out in the near future would be over-optimistic.

In the long run, however, this writer holds to his view that increasing ideological skepticism is inevitable among both the leaders and the masses. Already the problems of Soviet planning are completely out of touch with the official economic textbooks, which are simplified versions of *Das Kapital.* Though tribute may still be paid to Marx, the day may come when an industrial society, concerned more with efficiency than with orthodoxy, will cease to follow the Lenin-Stalin ideology. Revolutionary fervor—though revived by the successes of communism in Asia and the Middle East—is nevertheless bound, in the end, to die down, and probably to die out.

Will the Soviet citizen eventually obtain Rousseau's freedom—participation in sovereignty—through either the development of factions within the party, or perhaps even the emergence of a multiparty system? The prospect of any move toward full-fledged political freedom in the Western style is so far beyond the scope of present or even predictable evolutionary trends that speculation would be foolish. Only time and the forces already at work in Soviet society will provide the clues to Russia's political future.

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The Import of Ideological Diversity

By Sidney Hook

RECENT EVENTS in the Soviet orbit, dating from Stalin's death in March 1953, have posed the problem of what may be termed "liberation by evolution," that is, the gradual transformation, within the ideological tradition of Marxism-Leninism, of the totalitarian system of communism into a libertarian culture in which the strategic political and cultural freedoms of an open society are legally recognized and *in fact* realized.

Obviously it is impossible to predict if or when such a transformation actually will occur. This depends upon many factors outside the scope of the present discussion. The purpose of this essay is simply to raise the question of whether such a transformation is *possible,* and if it is, to determine which elements in the traditional Marxist ideology and which in current Communist theory and practice would lend themselves to such a development.

Of course, the ideology of Marxism and Leninism cannot so simply be assimilated to the ideal of human freedom. Yet anyone acquainted with the history of ideas knows that the same generic terms and doctrines have encompassed the widest variations in personality, belief and practice. Communism as a secular religion has often been compared with Christianity, and identified by Toynbee—mistakenly, in this author's view—with one of its sects. But how vast and full of incompatible elements is the spectrum of beliefs called "Christian." The development of Christianity is largely the history of radical changes, both in doctrine and in practice, by those who claimed to be doing no more than returning to the pure essence of the doctrine.

What is true of religious movements is also true of other fields of human experience. Whether we consider the actual content of the slogans "the return to Christ" or "the return to Kant," the "return to Rome or Jerusalem"—we will find that these returns always mark an original departure in doctrine and movement, sometimes in opposition to the actual intentions of the innovators.

What is for present purposes more to the point, is that even Lenin's slogan "Back to Marx," which he borrowed from Rosa Luxemburg, marked a tremendous revision in what until then had been understood as Marxism. Lenin's extremely voluntaristic *What Is to Be Done?,* although too simply characterized by some critics as spawned under Bakuninistic and Blanquist influence, was certainly not the Marxism of Kautsky and Plekhanov. What Lenin did to Marx in the name of Marxism, Stalin in lesser measure did to Lenin in the name of Leninism. This raises the question of the extent to which it will be possible in the current atmosphere of ambiguous devaluation of Stalin to initiate in other Communist countries even more far-reaching departures in Communist theory and practice by "returning to Marx."

Roads and Inroads

Communist theory and practice hang together more closely than in other ideologies, but it is possible to exaggerate their monolithic unity. Although adherence to a set of doctrines is, and always has been, *de rigueur* for all Communist parties affiliated with the Kremlin, some variations were permitted in the road to power—especially if they proved successful and were not taken in defiance of the Kremlin's orders. Stalin explicity condemned the American Communist theory of exceptionalism—which simply asserted the banal proposition that each Communist party must take note of the distinctive peculiarities of national political history and geography—primarily in order to replace one faction by a more compliant one. Yet when the opportunity presented itself after the war, he heartily approved of the manner in which the Czech, Yugoslav and Chinese Communists seized power, even though in one case it involved making the peasantry, not the proletariat, the basis of the Communist movement (China), and in no

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One of the most eminent of America's philosophers, Mr. Hook has authored many works, including *Reason, Social Myths and Democracy* (John Day, N. Y., 1944) and *The Hero in History* (Beacon Press, Boston, 1955). The present article is based on a lecture delivered last summer at the Collège de l'Europe Libre, Strasbourg-Robertsau, France. An expanded version appears in the Fall 1957 issue of *Partisan Review* (New York).

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case did it involve the use of soviets, in whose name the Communist Party had seized power in the Russian October Revolution.

When we turn from the consideration of "different roads to power" to "different roads to socialism" we find the variations in the practices of Communist states just as great, but enormously more significant. Different roads to power are comparable to different roads leading to a city. The city is the same irrespective of the way we reach it. But different roads to socialism, about which the classics of Marxism really say little, may be compared to different ways of building a city. The different ways of building a city result in substantially different cities because the means used are not like the scaffolding torn away when the building is constructed but are like the bricks and mortar, the steel and glass which become intrinsic elements of the finished construction. The architectural metaphor serves admirably to drive home the logic of the means-end relation. If it is true that not pious words but means determine ends, then the adoption of different means of constructing socialism involves the very real likelihood of different kinds of socialism, unwelcome as this may be to the leaders of the Communist movement.

TODAY under the name of communism and Marxism, we find considerable differences in the theory and practice of "socialist society" in four different regions—the Soviet Union, China, Yugoslavia, and Poland. Some of these differences reflect, so to speak, the historical and geographical landscape and the accidents attendant upon origin. The differences may turn out to be even more momentous because to the extent that theory is a guide to action—and it is often only a rationalization of action —differences in doctrine can lead to the intensification of differences in social, economic and cultural behavior. Thus, when Mao Tse-tung says that socialism is a garden in which many different theories can be permitted to grow, he has said something of which Khrushchev cannot approve without the danger of letting the "thaw" get out of hand. Even though, as seems likely, Mao Tse-tung will destroy as a "poisonous weed" any doctrine he does not like, his words may meanwhile inspire programs of liberalization in other countries—programs hesitant and tentative, to be sure, but still possible bases for further development. Even more significant, when Gomulka proclaims (in his speech to the Eighth Plenum in October 1956) that "the best definition of the social contents inherent in the idea of socialism is contained in the definition that socialism is a social system which abolishes the exploitation and oppression of man by man," and that "what is immutable in socialism can be reduced to the abolition of the exploitation of man by man," these pronouncements constitute a more radical revision of traditional Marxism-Leninism-Stalinism than do Titoism and Maoism. For it follows at once that socialism, by this definition, is absent in the Soviet Union and the "people's democracies"—since it is not difficult to show that their populations, as they very well know, are exploited and oppressed economically, culturally, and politically. It follows that even a Jeffersonian community of small landowners who till their own soil and one of individual craftsmen who own their instruments of production, who do not employ others and hence cannot exploit their labor, would have to be called socialistic!

The very conception of "different roads to socialism" gives rise naturally to the notion of "national communism" so much feared by the Kremlin and therefore even by Tito and Gomulka. For "national communism" is just as much a departure from the classic views of international communism as "national socialism" is from the socialism of the *Communist Manifesto*. And in a genuine sense the first expression of national communism is to be found not in Titoism but in Stalinism, under which the concluding line of the *Communist Manifesto* was in practice made to read: "Workers of the World Unite—to Defend the Soviet Union."

Property and Power

The question here raised is whether, in terms of the official ideology and in the light of incontestable realities, the totalitarian integument of Communist doctrine can be shattered by uncovering, developing and reinterpreting the rich legacy of ambiguities in the intellectual and social movement of Marxism. The existence of these ambiguities is revealed in the accounts given by former ideological functionaries of Communist parties, such as Wolfgang Leonhard, of the process by which their difficulties developed into cancerous doubts, and Stalin was gradually rejected in the name of Lenin, and Lenin finally rejected in the name of Marx. I am not raising the question of whether any profound institutional changes can take place by way of doctrine alone, for this seems very improbable. Economic and international political factors are usually more weighty. I am asking only whether in the struggle for freedom, any aspect of the Marxist tradition can be refashioned and sharpened into a serviceable weapon in the cause of liberation—a liberation not only from foreign but from domestic despots.

Let us look at some key Marxist concepts in this light.

There are two conceptions of property in Marx and the Marxist tradition, one of which provides the basis

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not only for the critique of capitalism but even more powerfully for a critique of what passes for "socialist economy".

The first conception of property is substantial and legalistic. It defines property in terms of legal relations where the law is construed as a decree certifying title of ownership. The development of modern economy in the West has limited the usefulness of this concept by separating title from actual economic power. The second conception of property in Marx is functional and sociological. It is bound up with the Marxist ethical critique of capitalism. According to this conception, property is a form of power—the power not so much to use or abuse instruments, goods and services (since this is always limited) as the power to exclude others from using them. Wherever property in land and instruments of production gives power to exclude individuals from the land and from access to instruments of production, they give a very real power over the personal lives of these individuals.

Where legal title to property has been abolished, the continued *de facto* power to deny others access to goods and services, and especially access to the means of livelihood, in effect gives those who wield this power most of the traditional rights of ownership under classical capitalism. This cuts right to the heart of the fiction that collectivized or nationalized industry, since it is no *one* man's individual property, *eo ipso* automatically spells the end of exploitation. Under any system of socialization, where the institutional framework makes it possible for workers to be systematically denied access to the means of production, *i.e.*, to their means of livelihood, it is a mockery to speak of the workers' ownership of the productive plant.

THE SAME applies when it is said that the property in question is *state* property. For this merely pushes the question farther back. To whom does the state belong or who controls the state? If a group is excluded from effective political participation, what sense does it make to say that the state belongs to that group?

In the Soviet Union and in most of the satellite countries the juridical change in proprietorship transferred title from capitalists and landlords to the collectivity. But the collectivity is a legal fiction whose actual content, according to sound Marxist principles, depends upon how it is actually organized, how it functions, and the different roles played by different groups in the actual processes of production. Almost from the very beginning, the Communist rulers had absolute power to deny any peasant or worker access to farm or factory, to decide what should be saved, spent and how,

ECLECTIC MARXISM

We are faced with the following problem: since the conception of Marxism as currently established by the authorities has broken down in the minds of many intellectuals who have considered themselves Marxists, can we say that the concept of Marxism itself has retained any validity—and if so, in what sense, except in the historical sense of being related to the works of the man whose name has come to stand for a doctrine? What sense is there in the slogans demanding the "development of Marxism," or in the classification of scientists as "Marxists" and "non-Marxists"? . . .

If we wish to construct a new conceptual apparatus, designed to analyze social stratifications in types of society unknown to Marx, and if we employ certain methodological rules very consistently applied in Marx's work . . . rules which in all analyses of collective life bid us look for the basic reasons underlying the cleavage of society into antagonistic groups; if it turns out that in certain societies these cleavages occur according to different criteria than those postulated by Marx for the bourgeois world of the nineteenth century, then the very fact that we have employed these very general methodological rules—rules uniquely characteristic of Marx's works—means that we are operating within the confines of a "Marxist" sociology.

However, it also happens that the progress of knowledge and science demands not only the expansion of conceptual tools and methodological rules as compared with their use in Marx's works, but also the investigation and revision of some precepts posited by Marx himself.

—*Leszek Kolakowski, "Valid and Outdated Conceptions of Marxism,"* Nowa Kultura *(Warsaw), January 27, 1957.*

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and to determine the conditions and rewards of work as well as everything else connected with the use of the industrial plant, natural resources, etc.; this power was in no way susceptible to control by those whom its decisions so fatefully affected. In effect, then—and again according to legitimate Marxist categories—the instruments of production belonged to the Communist Party hierarchy, giving it all the traditional privileges of ownership except the right to buy and sell and the right of testamentary disposition. Under such a setup, workers can be and have been exploited more intensively, *i.e.,* more surplus value has been sweated out of them, than under other forms of legal ownership since the early days of the industrial revolution.

Despite the semantic outrage of referring to the Soviet Union or any other Communist economy as a "workers' state" and to the productive plant as "state property," the facts were really not in dispute. When Lenin brutally proclaimed to the Eleventh Congress of the Russian Communist Party, in 1922, "We are the state," he might as well have said, "We are the owners of the economy." [1] Insofar as Marxism is a critique of the economies of exploitation, it can be used more legitimately and with greater devastation in present-day Communist countries than in most of the present-day democratic capitalistic countries of the West.

It is obvious when we look at the economies which are called socialist in countries like the USSR, China, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and Poland that there are considerable differences in practice. When we examine Marxist theory we can detect even greater potential differences in meaning—a democratic or totalitarian variant. Because Marxism is primarily a critique of capitalism, it provides no specific directives but only general guides as to how to build socialism. These guides are more social, political and moral than economic in nature, because Marx assumed that the processes of accumulation would have progressed to a point where there would be no problem of having to construct capital goods industries. The ambiguities in Marxism are aggravated by the Bolshevik success in refuting (or revising) Marx in their attempt to lay the foundation of socialist economy by political means in industrially backward areas—something presumably ruled out by historical materialism. The most fervent "Marxists" today are those who have actually refuted Marx while excoriating the revisionists of Marx.

There is no historical necessity in the way in which socialism is to be built, otherwise we could not speak of different paths to socialism. No matter what the objective economic conditions, other factors enter into the situation. Among them an important—though not necessarily decisive—factor may be the way in which traditional Marxist principles are interpreted and developed. The direction in which "socialist" economy and society will develop may depend, for example, in some countries upon how the principle of "workers' control," stressed in pre-revolutionary terms by both syndicalists and Marxists alike, is understood.

Workers' Control

There has always been an ambiguity about the nature and function of "workers control" in socialist theory. The utopian theory of Marxism, according to which some day the state will disappear, made the organs of workers' control on the level of the factory the administrative unit of society which would function without coercion by the voluntary cooperation of an historically new species of man. For purposes of revolutionary struggle, "workers' control" was stressed as a means of heightening the pitch of a revolutionary situation. All tendencies within the socialist movement declared themselves for workers' control but few seemed clear about what it meant. All agreed, however, that workers' control was something exercised for the workers by a political group monopolizing power or, on the other hand, that it was something exercised by the workers themselves, following whatever leadership they chose.

In the early days of bolshevism, on the eve of taking power and shortly thereafter, the Communists stressed in the most emphatic way the desirability of workers' control in every factory. Before long, however, the control of the Communist Party asserted itself so forcibly that the phrase "workers' control" became a transparent piece of terminological hypocrisy. Lenin himself led the fight against "the workers' opposition," a group in the Communist Party which took the earlier agitational and propaganda slogans seriously, as an anarcho-syndicalist deviation.

The Yugoslav Communists who speak today of "workers' control" imply that Stalin revised Lenin's position on this question while they are following the Leninist pattern. This is a misleading over-simplification. It results from confusing decentralization of industry and planning, which permits greater autonomy to the individual plant, and which the Yugoslavs have carried out, with independent workers' control in the decentralized plants, a control which the Yugoslavs only promise. And if they follow Lenin, they will never deliver on their promises. For even in the most liberal period of Soviet economic life, Lenin insisted that in the interests of rapid

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works,* Vol. II, Part 2, p. 644, Moscow, Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1951.

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construction of large-scale industry "it is absolutely essential that all authority in the factories should be in the hands of the management." [2]

It need not be pointed out that management in the so-called capitalist countries has much less power over workers than management in socialist societies, while trade unions in the former enjoy far more control in actual practice than do workers' councils in theory. Lenin recognized the limited role of the trade unions in correcting "the excesses and blunders resulting from the bureaucratic distortions of the state apparatus," [3] and this stand was of tremendous importance in that it provided a justification of the right of the workers to strike in the so-called "workers' state"—to strike in all state enterprises. That this right was hedged in by all sorts of restrictions and qualifications, that it was more honored in the breach than in the observance, does not detract from its significance and its use as a rallying cry in the present and future. It was this truncated right which was lost under Stalin and in all Stalinist regimes. It was a grievous loss, for the abolition of the right to strike means in effect the existence of a system of forced labor with all its multiform kinds of exploitation and aggression.

IN YUGOSLAVIA today a very limited kind of workers' control through workers' councils operates in conjunction with a largely decentralized industry planned to meet the market needs of local regions. This system came into existence more because of economic necessity than because of political virtue.[4] And however limited the control, Soviet critical reaction has not been the less severe. What is interesting is the theoretical justification of these institutional deviations from the Soviet pattern expressed by Kardelj and other Yugoslav Communists in grandiose ideological terms.

Edward Kardelj, the leading Yugoslav theoretician, in his speech of December 7, 1956, before the Yugoslav People's Assembly, frankly accepts the theory of exceptionalism, but he claims Yugoslavia to be exceptional in being most faithful to the conceptions of Marx and Lenin.[5] The development of socialist industry, he asserts, must take place concomitantly with a progressive democratization of all social relations. "Human beings should not in a socialist system become the slaves of a state machine in the name of any higher interests whatsoever." To achieve independence from the state machine, the social and economic position of the worker must be secured by strengthening the democratic control of the workers in the factories and in their communities. Only in this way can the state wither away in Marxist fashion instead of becoming an all-devouring Frankenstein monster.

For Kardelj, the key issue is to avoid the bureaucratization of socialism. This is inevitable, according to him, unless there is "active, direct and increasing participation of the producers in the direction of state and industry." Those who, like the Soviet Russian apologists, interpret this as undermining the dictatorship of the proletariat are indifferent, he says, to the fact that "the dictatorship which they characterize as 'proletarian' can be anything else in the world except proletarian, precisely because it is not filled with a democratic content."

The motivation of this theoretical departure from Stalinism, the extent to which it is actually embodied in Yugoslavian practice, and the political uses to which it is put are irrelevant issues in this discussion. Tito, for example, although professing to blame the Hungarian Stalinists for refusing to follow the lead of the Hungarian workers, inconsistently supports the Soviet suppression of their councils. Considerations of *Staatsraeson* obviously determine the official reactions. But once launched upon the world, ideas, although not independ-

YUGOSLAV DIALECTICS

The product of a factory, which is social property cannot, under conditions of socialism, be treated as state property, that is, as property which is managed by organs beyond the direct influence of the worker, the producer, who had participated in production. The product represents the unity of the contradictory relationship between collective social property and the individual property of the producer. To separate these two elements from one another would connote either the turning of the worker into a slave of a state-capitalist system or the abolition of social ownership of the means of production. A peaceful and progressive solution of these contradictions is only possible on condition, first, that the working collective itself manage the enterprise on the basis of a democratically enacted overall economic plan . . . and second, that . . . it directly influence the basic distribution of surpluses created in the enterprises.

—From an address by Edward Kardelj of December 7, 1957 (published in Borba, Belgrade, December 9).

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 648.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 646.

[4] For a discussion of the origin and functioning of Yugoslav workers' councils, see E. Halperin, "Is Russia Going Titoist?" *Problems of Communism*, September-October 1956.

[5] *Borba*, Belgrade, issues of December 8 and 9, 1956. A German translation appears in *Ost-Probleme*, Bonn, March 8, 1957.

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ent, may develop a life and an influence of their own. It is the direction of the Yugoslav heresy which is important —not only its nationalism, its claim that all Communist states are equal in dignity in a common cause, but its emphasis upon a conception of workers' democracy which might turn out, once material conditions are favorable to it, to be an ideological hydrogen bomb.

THE MOST significant thing about the ideological position of the Yugoslav regime is that, if it is taken seriously, it spells the end of the political monopoly of the Communist Party. A "workers' control" which is in turn controlled by a party faction with the secret police behind it collapses of itself—it dies of boredom and disinterest, like the Russian soviets and local trade unions. Some semblance of power, no matter how fearfully guarded by the party watchdogs, must be given to the workers. This power in time either grows from what it feeds upon or becomes atrophied. It is the natural form through which, where it exists, opposition can be "legitimately" channeled.

That Kardelj, for all his lack of clarity, his inconsistencies and backtracking, is on the right road, from the point of view of intensifying the struggle between the democratic and totalitarian potentials of socialism, is evidenced in part by the character of the embittered reply made to him by a Soviet writer, by name Rumiantsev, in the chief theoretical organ of the CPSU, *Kommunist* No. 18, 1957. As Rumiantsev recognizes, Kardelj in effect is charging that the Soviet Union is a new form of class state in which, although the legal title of ownership has been transferred to the workers and peasants, the latter are in fact being exploited by the state apparatus, its functionaries and pensioners, and that consquently the class struggle is still being waged in the alleged socialist society, not between non-existent capitalists and landlords, on the one hand, and the toiling masses, on the other hand, but between the latter and the new class of Communist officials, managers and their retainers. Rumiantsev attempts to toss this off with a laugh as a *reductio ad absurdum* too ridiculous to require refutation —and then attempts one anyhow. If the workers by definition own the instruments of production, he asks, how can they be said to exploit themselves? He is oblivious to the possibility that there may be something wrong with his definition, and that to resort to it in the face of the glaring facts of political and economic inequality is merely to fall back on a question-begging definition.

Gomulka's discussion of the function of the workers' councils is something else. He sees their development as one of the three main elements in the "Polish road to socialism." In his speech before the Ninth Plenum of the Party Central Committee (May 1957) Gomulka outlines seven chief tasks of the workers' councils which if taken literally would make them masters of the factories and, therefore, of all of industry. He warns against regarding the councils "as organs of political power," but at the same time is fearful lest the political leadership of the Communist Party fractions be displaced. He wants workers' councils to be autonomous and at the same time seeks (in vain, it seems to this observer) to limit their functions to purely industrial issues. Because of the nature of the Polish economy, he is undoubtedly sensible in cautioning the workers' councils against a too near-sighted and too decentralized view of the needs of production. But if they are actually given the right to make mistakes in these matters, they are being given very real powers indeed. And he is quite forthright in acknowledging the right of the workers to strike, although he does not regard this as the best way of rectifying grievances.

Gomulka's ambiguous feelings about increasing the power of the workers' councils stem from his fear that they may work free of the influence of the Communist Party, whose leading position he regards as essential to the building of socialism. As if aware that all the elements which define the Polish "road to socialism," if given their head, may carry Poland out of the Kremlin's orbit, as if to reassure the uneasy Russians, he delivers even stronger attacks against those he calls revisionists, and who really are democratic socialists of the Western type than against the Stalinist dogmatists and conservatives. Gomulka taxes the revisionists with believing that socialism can be built without any class struggles. The accuracy of this characterization can be regarded as very questionable. The difficulty is to know what kind of class struggle can be waged after the capitalists and great landholders disappear. Struggles still go on, but if they are class struggles they are of the kind that Kardelj describes—between the toilers, the workers and peasants, and the state and party officialdom. More accurate is Gomulka's charge against the revisionists that they are opposed to the dictatorship of the Communist Party. This is true. But it is also true of Marx.

The Dictatorship of the Proletariat

It is perfectly clear by now that "the dictatorship of the proletariat" as interpreted by Lenin and Stalin is substantially the dictatorship of the Communist Party over the proletariat and all other social groups. That this represented a radical departure from the meaning Marx gave to the rarely used phrase in his writings can scarcely be doubted. Marx and Engels pointed to the Paris Commune as illustrating what they meant by "the dictatorship of the proletariat." The Commune was one in which several different political groups or parties par-

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MARXISM AND SCIENCE

[In the realm of science] Marxism does not constitute a universal system of views applicable to all conditions, but only a method subject to the same laws as all other scientific methods . . . Yes, it is even conceivable that on concrete questions a Marxist will have to declare himself in agreement with scholars of a different school of thought rather than with scholars of his own school. From the standpoint of the development of science the distinction between Marxists and non-Marxists is justifiable only on the supposition that Marxism really has a monopoly [on truth], but such a supposition is not defensible. This is of particular importance at present, for Marxism is still beset by irrational tendencies. I see no rational reason to persuade any one to be in agreement with authors whose most important social function is to compromise Marxism by blunting the critical faculties of human beings in the name of Marx . . . A clear-cut separation between Marxists and non-Marxists can be made only on the basis of methodological commitment. In instances when two researchers come into contact with each other the conflict will be over facts, over interpretations, over the solution of concrete questions. Even if both appeal to Marxism, they will quarrel not over Marxism but over the truth. To what extent an opinion is Marxist is something that will have to be determined by the historian. In the meantime, one ought to be satisfied with simply resolving the problem of whose view corresponds to reality and whose view opens wider perspectives for further research.

—Jerzy Szacki, "Kilka uwag o marksizme Dzisiejszym" (Some Remarks about Contemporary Marxism), published in Przeglad Kulturalny, Warsaw, No. 16, 1957.

ticipated, and in which the followers of Marx were a tiny minority. In the Communist Manifesto, Marx had said that Communists "do not constitute themselves a special party over and above other working-class parties."

The "dictatorship of the proletariat" in the corpus of Marx's writings is not primarily a political concept but a social one. The opposite of the phrase is the "dictatorship of the bourgeoisie." Since, according to Marxist theory, a "dictatorship of the bourgeoisie" is compatible with many political forms ranging from monarchy, Bonapartism and other expressions of dictatorship through an entire spectrum of parliamentary democracies, it is clear that the economic and social content of the dictatorship of the proletariat, in theory at least, is compatible with the existence of one or more political parties and with political structures ranging from dictatorship to democracy.

Socialism declares itself opposed to all forms of exploitation and oppression, to any kind of class society in which coercion, open or veiled, is present. Marxism recognizes, however, that every dictatorship, even when it is considered progressive with respect to expanding the forces of production, is a form of oppression. If one takes Marx literally, the elimination of all coercion from human relations, the complete withering away of the state, is a Utopian ideal—but pragmatically it can be interpreted as an ideal of diminishing coercion and exploitation of human society.

If one reads Marx in the light of modern sociology, one understands that classes will continue to exist, class struggles will continue to be fought, even though the role of classes will differ when different social relationships are introduced. A strike under socialism is a struggle even though some terminological purist may balk at calling it an expression of class struggle. In either case, or in either interpretation, there is an immanent dynamic toward greater democracy in the Marxist ideal, toward a permanent revolution against whatever series of evils the social process generates.

MARXISM is a philosophically primitive system, but it never identified the social system of the future with the end or process of history itself in the way in which Hegel identified the Absolute Idea or the Way of God with the Prussian state. Because communism is a disease of idealism, if only it does not harden into the fanaticism which makes a fetish of the instrument—the instrument of the Communist Party—it may prove to be susceptible to the virus of political liberalism.

Historically, in Russia the Bolsheviks took power with the Left Social Revolutionists as a cover. They permitted other socialist parties to exist for a time in a tortured way. On paper, but only on paper, bourgeois parties could exist. On occasion, in order to bring home the distinction between the dictatorship as a social and economic instrument and dictatorship as a political weapon, Lenin maintained that it is "quite conceivable that the dictatorship of the proletariat may suppress the bourgeoisie at every step without disenfranchising the bourgeoisie; . . . while it is essential to suppress the bourgeoisie as an [economic] class, it is not essential to deprive them of their suffrage and equality." [6]

What this meant with respect to bourgeois parties, and later all other parties, is that if they agreed not to oppose the program of the Communist Party in any way whatsoever after the latter seized power, they would be permitted to exist, although it is not clear what the point of their political existence would be. With respect to other working-class or socialist parties, Bolshevik fanaticism led to the same result. For the Bolsheviks

[6] Lenin, *op. cit.*, p. 169.

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believed that any serious disagreement with the Communist Party by *definition* had counter-revolutionary objective consequences.

The Communist regimes in the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia and some of the satellites are unabashed one-party dictatorships. In China, Poland, Czechoslovakia and East Germany the Communist Party rules with the device of spurious coalition parties. The existence of these parties is in part the price the Communists pay for their hypocritical pretenses to democracy, but under a favorable conjunction of circumstances, especially in the satellite countries, where aspirations to national independence are strong, conditions may compel them to pay a higher and higher price in granting political rights to other parties.

In this connection, of course, Gomulka's regime is unique. Since he is trying to do the impossible, to keep the dictatorship of the Communist Party and to encourage the independence of the Peasant Party, Gomulka must fail. But he and those who support him can fail in two ways—fail in encouraging other political parties or fail in being good Bolsheviks. In the view of democracy, the latter failure is of course preferable. When Gomulka proclaims, "It is a poor idea to maintain that only Communists can build socialism, that only peoples holding materialistic social views can do so," he should certainly be applauded, and even more so when he characterizes socialism in ethical terms as "the system of social justice."

When with this conception of socialism he urges "competition between our party and the Peasant Party as well as between all those in favor of strengthening the socialist system," he has taken a longer stride away from the Leninist and Stalinist conception of the political dictatorship of the minority Communist Party than he is aware of. When he also calls for the revitalization of the *Sejm* (parliament), its assumption of greater legislative tasks, and control over the work of the government and state organs, when he proclaims that "in my opinion Sejm control over the executive organs of state power should be exercised by an institution subordinated directly to the Sejm and not to the government as has been the case up to now," who can fail to hear with his inner ear, despite the uncertain words and reluctant tone, the voice of parliamentary democracy.[7]

Many of the moves away from total or extreme collectivization and the more conspicuous forms of party terrorism in Communist countries are motivated today by considerations of political strategy. They may be reversed overnight. Nonetheless they are all points of ideological and institutional infection in the Communist body politic. If these heretical germs get into the Marxist blood stream, they may produce fevers in the short run and languors in the long run, resulting in profound organic changes in the system.

Recent events behind the Iron Curtain have shown that socialist humanism, despite its exaggerated claims to novelty, has a greater continuity with traditional forms of Western humanism than both its official spokesmen and its hostile Western critics imagined. The new Soviet men, the new Communist men with new criteria of the true, the good, and the beautiful, of whom Stalin boasted and whom the West feared, are a myth. Despite the principle of "partiinost" or partisanship in dialectical materialism, Communist intellectuals, whether scientists or historians, know the difference between truth and lies, facts and fiction.

Things can never be the same again after the fumbling attempt of Stalin's accomplices to destalinize, after the Polish declaration of independence, after the heroic spectacle of the Hungarian nation in arms against the Soviet occupation. Even without war or foreign intervention, even without violent revolution, the intellectual elite of all Communist countries will produce in each generation, and in every social group or class, critical spirits nurtured on the ideals of freedom expressed in the classics of Marxism as well as in those of the humanist tradition, well aware of the discrepancies between Soviet promise and performance, and of the Communists' betrayal of almost all the liberating ideals which inspired the socialist movement. Their presence, whether articulate or eloquently silent, will constitute a permanent opposition to cultural and political tyranny.

Given the history of the twentieth century, once a "thaw" sets in in any aspect of culture in a totalitarian society, it has a tendency to extend not only into neighboring cultural fields but to take political form as well. The chagrin and rage of the Soviet Communist leaders at the Hungarian and Polish intellectuals is due to their realization that the heretical cultural ideas of these men will prove in the long run politically infectious. The logic of the situation is such that every concession made to artists, writers, or scientists carries with it consequences that call for further concessions, which when denied put into question the sincerity and genuineness of the first concession. History oftens shows that changes are more rapid when things begin to get a bit better. Despair paralyzes the will to action, especially risky action; hope inspires it. We can be sure that the slight taste of the freedoms which the peoples of the satellite countries have been given, after being deprived of them for almost a decade, will generate an enormous appetite for more—and perhaps this hunger will spread to the Soviet Union itself.

[7] All quotations from Gomulka's speech before the Eighth Party Plenum, October 20, 1956.

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The Soviet Industrial Reorganization

By Alec Nove

ON JULY 1, 1957, the Khrushchev regime launched a major reform of the Soviet economy, under which the bulk of industrial and building enterprises passed from the control of various central ministries to newly-created Regional Economic Councils, or *Sovnarkhozy*. The reform was accompanied by a drastic political shake-up in the top echelons of the CPSU, leading many commentators to interpet Khrushchev's new program as primarily an act in the political struggle for power. Khrushchev, so it has been argued, sought to smash the ministerial machines in which his enemies were entrenched, while strengthening the grip of the party machine on economic life. It is clear that the power struggle played an important role in the processes of elaborating and promulgating the reform; its measures were controversial, affecting numerous vested interests, and they probably were of key significance in the conflict between Khrushchev and the so-called "anti-party group" within the leadership. On the other hand, it would be misleading to regard the reorganization as *solely* a power maneuver, for such a view ignores its intrinsic importance as an attempt to deal with real problems which beset the Soviet economy. The present instance would not be the first time a major reform rooted in social or economic conditions has been carried through by an ambitious politican intent on strengthening his personal power position. Stalin, in launching his collectivization campaign in 1928-29, was no doubt plotting to isolate and defeat the Bukharin-Rykov group, but this aspect of his policy hardly merits priority in assessing its historic significance.

There were, then, economic considerations of great importance behind the recent reorganization. The background situation against which the reform must be viewed was discussed at some length in articles by Gregory Grossman and the present writer in *Problems of Communism* for March-April 1957, both of which were written prior to the announcement of Khrushchev's proposals. Briefly, as was pointed out there, the Soviet economy has long been laboring under strain. Many factors have contributed to this condition; essentially, however, the problem of the regime is one of reconciling its quest for maximum growth ("overtaking the most advanced capitalist countries at the earliest date") with other insistent demands on Soviet resources (arising out of necessary concessions to the population in the form of consumer goods, the need to increase agricultural production, the economic requirements of foreign policy, *etc.*)—and this in a period of labor shortage.

"Departmentalism"—A Fundamental Defect

These various pressures on the economy obviously called for the most efficient possible use of available resources, and the top-heavy structure of planning and control inherited from Stalin simply was not doing the job. At least as early as July 1955, at a party plenum called to discuss problems of industry, the Soviet leadership began to hint publicly that difficulties were due to failings in the economic system itself. When the strains became so great as to compel a downward revision of the tempo of growth envisaged in the Sixth Five-Year Plan, in December 1956, the issue of economic organization became manifestly urgent. It is very likely that the need for radical changes of some kind was appreciated by all leaders, though they were to come to blows over what action should be taken.

One of the more serious obstacles to efficiency arose out of the centralization of planning and operational control in Moscow, with responsibility divided among some forty economic ministries. Under heavy pressure

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to fulfil ambitious plans, each ministry understandably tended to look after its own enterprises, and rational cooperation between enterprises belonging to different ministries was rendered difficult. While the sins of "departmentalism" were possibly overstressed by the Soviet press in its efforts to prepare public opinion for the recent reform, there is little doubt that a great deal of waste was incurred as a result of the lack of coordination in the operations of ministries. Among examples recently cited in the press was the case of a large quarry worked by eight small quarrying enterprises, each representing a different user ministry which sought to ensure its own supplies. Another instance involved two steamer fleets operated under different ministries on the same river; one sailed empty in one direction, the other in the opposite direction.[1] There also have been numerous cases cited of waste in transporting materials to and from factories within one ministerial system, and repeated complaints concerning delays due to the need to refer decisions to a distant Moscow.

Obviously these defects were real and there was need for corrective action. In determining what course to take, the Soviet leaders had a choice between two alternative approaches: they could delegate much wider powers at the actual production level, *i.e.* to the managers of enterprises, or they could create more effective operational and planning units in the localities. The first of these implied a radical departure from established methods of bureaucratic control through the governmental and party apparatuses. Considering both Khrushchev's character and the party's traditional view of its functions, it is hardly surprising that the second alternative was chosen. However, a scheme along the latter lines could have many variants, and clearly the political struggle had a direct effect on the version finally adopted.

Plans and Politics

The essentials of the new forms of organization are doubtless familiar to most readers. The Soviet Union has been divided into 105 economic regions, of which 70 are in the Russian republic (RSFSR) and 11 in the Ukraine. In each there is to be a Regional Economic Council, or *Sovnarkhoz,* acting as the planning and operational boss for nearly all industrial and construction enterprises situated within its borders. In the large majority of cases, industrial ministries have been abolished both in Moscow and in the republic capitals. The exceptions, mainly involving control of industries of defense interest, need not concern the present discussion.[2] The typical Soviet enterprise, both in heavy and light industry, now takes its orders from its *Sovnarkhoz.* The latter is subordinated to the Council of Ministers of its republic (subject in turn to the usual party controls). The all-Union government, particularly Gosplan, and the party apparatus are supposed to ensure the necessary degree of central leadership.

These proposals were adopted after a hard struggle within the leadership; but while the existence of dissension over this and other aspects of Soviet policy became increasingly obvious, the interplay of political forces in the course of the struggle presents a confused picture. It is virtually impossible to analyze the complex motivations which governed Krushchev or his opponents at different phases of the "debate" over economic organization, the conflicting viewpoints which determined the alignment of forces, the extent to which differences over other policies were involved, *etc.* The indications are, however, that if Krushchev's position was ever shaky, it was in the aftermath of the Hungarian revolution in the fall of 1956. Insofar as economic policy was concerned, the decisions of a party plenum in December 1956 indicated that the prevailing opinion within the leadership favored tackling the disease of departmentalism through the subordination of almost all of the economic ministries to the State Economic Commission, with the economic expert Pervukhin at its head. This agency had been created in May 1955 to take over responsibility for current economic affairs from Gosplan, whose functions were reduced at the time to long-term planning and research. Even the two ministries dealing with agricultural affairs, Khrushchev's special interest, were placed under Pervukhin, leading some observers to interpret the plan as an attempt to limit Khrushchev's interference in economic affairs. It is possible, on the other hand, that the December decisions were intended from the first as an interim move.

At any rate, Khrushchev's first proposals, put forward in his "theses" of April 1957, preserved the idea adopted in December of combining planning and administrative power in one central body, though he referred to the latter by the old designation of Gosplan. He suggested that the old ministries be abolished (significantly, however, agriculture was now excluded from the reform) and that an undetermined number of *Sovnarkhozy* be created. The latter were to be under "dual subordination"—*i.e.,* controlled directly from Moscow as well as by the respective republic authorities.

[1] *Pravda,* April 15, 1957.

[2] Small industrial units of purely local significance, which are under the control of municipal Soviets, are also beyond the purview of the reform and of this article.

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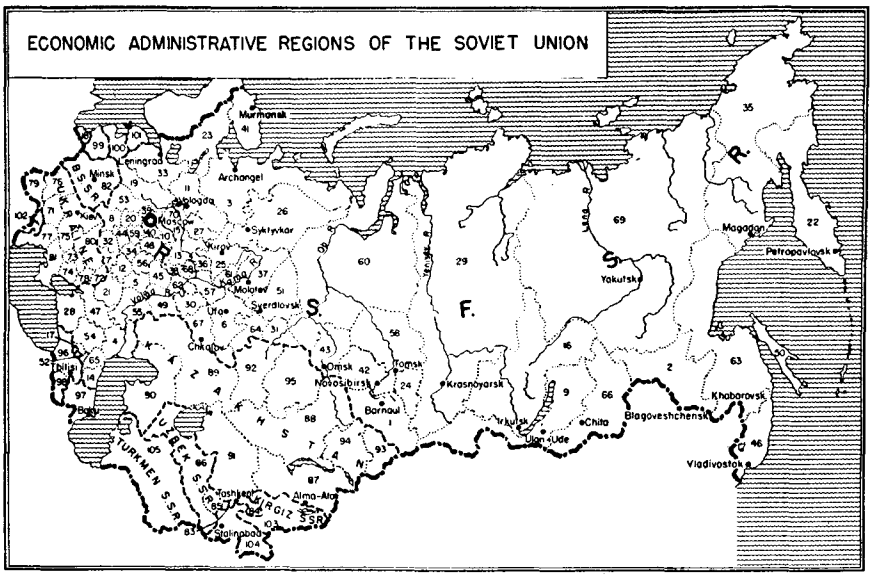

Map indicates regional divisions as of July 1, 1957, falling within constituent republics as follows:

1-70	Russian SFSR
71-81	Ukrainian SSR
82	Belorussian SSR
83-86	Uzbek SSR
87-95	Kazakh SSR
96	Georgian SSR
97	Azerbaijan SSR
98	Armenian SSR
99	Lithuanian SSR
100	Latvian SSR
101	Estonian SSR
102	Moldavian SSR
103	Kirgiz SSR
104	Tadzhik SSR
105	Turkmenian SSR

In the month which followed, there was an unusually open debate of the "theses" in the Soviet press, indicative of the intensive discussion and maneuvering which must have been going on behind the closed doors of the leadership councils. The result was a number of significant changes in Khrushchev's plan, as finally adopted by the Supreme Soviet in May. First, Gosplan was reassigned responsibility for both long-term and current planning but was stripped of all executive power, while the State Economic Commission was abolished altogether. An unknown party bureaucrat, Kuzmin, was appointed to head the new Gosplan, to the surprise of all observers. The republics were given undivided control over their *Sovnarkhozy* (as vs. "dual" direct control as first proposed by Khrushchev; the republic governments and party organs remain subject, of course, to many controls from the center). It was also left to the republics to decide the number of regions into which they would be divided.

As noted, it is by no means clear how these various changes were related to the political struggle going on in the party presidium. Thus, for example, while Khrushchev first proposed a strong Gosplan, he may have come to favor a limitation of its powers as a means to prevent the rise of Pervukhin as an economic "rival," if he thought the latter would be appointed its head (this might have seemed a strong likelihood in view of the December actions of the party plenum). On the other hand, Khrushchev may have decided that a weak Gosplan would tend to throw more responsibility for economic administration on the party apparatus; this might have seemed attractive to him quite apart from any immediate desire to down an opponent.

Political rather than economic considerations clearly influenced certain other aspects of the scheme as it was finally adopted. For instance, why were as many as 105 economic regions created? A number of voices were raised in public discussion favoring far fewer regions—one for the Urals, one for East Siberia, and so on. It was pointed out that the split-up of these and other natural economic regions under the jurisdiction of three or four *Sovnarkhozy* would create awkward problems. An official of the Gosplan research institute, by name Omarovski, argued in print in favor of 10 to 12 *Sovnarkhozy* for the RSFSR, rather than the 70 which now exist. Why, then, are there so many?

Intra-Party Pressures from Below

The only possible explanation is that the leadership wanted to avoid interfering with existing administrative boundaries, or, in political-personal terms, with the areas of influence of local party secretaries, who have always been the key personalities at the *oblast* (district) level. An *oblast* party secretary's status would inevitably be threatened if his territory were linked to a neighbor's. Suppose, for example, that the adjoining *oblasti* of Belgorod, Bryansk and Kursk were made into one economic region. Who would be the party man in charge? Either a new boss would be sent out from headquarters, or one of the three secretaries would have to be placed in authority over the others. In either case, some party officials would be aggrieved, which might result in strengthening any group of malcontents in a factional struggle. It is probably for this reason that, in the RSFSR at any rate, the line of least resistance was followed: with very few exceptions, the boundaries of the new regions have coincided with those of existing *oblasti*.

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It is also worth noting that 105 regions mean 105 *Sovnarkhozy* chairmen—i.e., 105 vacancies in the official hierarchy, many of which could be filled by former ministers and deputy-ministers whose departments have been abolished. It is unlikely that Khrushchev wishes to alienate these men, and in this way most of them can be given honorable posts.

Politics probably accounts, too, for the granting of additional powers to the republics. As was noted above, Khrushchev's original proposals gave Moscow direct access to the regions, over the heads of the republics. Such a by-passing arrangement would have tended to curtail the political-economic role of the republic governmental and party leaderships. When the proposals became known, these authorities doubtless exerted pressure to obtain full jurisdiction within the line of command, making the regions subordinate in the first instance to the republic capitals. A significant illustration of their attitude is afforded by the behavior of the Uzbek party leader, Mukhitdinov. At first he pressed for only one region for Uzbekistan. However, when the scheme in its final form ensured that Moscow could not bypass Tashkent, he changed his mind. There are now four *Sovnarkhozy* in Uzbekistan.[3]

These examples suggest that Khrushchev, relying as he does on the support of provincial party secretaries, adapted the reforms to their ambitions and tried to avoid treading on their political sore spots. In this respect, as in some others, politics seems to have played a primary role. Yet the problems which are being tackled are real enough; they were not simply conjured up by Khrushchev in order to smash his opponents. Some action was necessary; the fact that the actual measures taken were adapted to, and influenced by, the political struggle should not be surprising. Few politicians in any country act in a wholly disinterested manner, and they seldom overlook the effects of their policies on their personal position. There is no reason why Khrushchev should be an exception.

Old Problems in New Forms

To turn now to a more practical problem, can the new system work—or work better than the old? It is, of course, too early to express a definitive view, and the present assessment can be no more than a preliminary examination of the evidence so far available. Some observations, however, are in order.

First, it seems probable that certain of the inefficiencies which occurred under the "ministerial" system will be rarer in the future. It will be easier to ensure the cooperation of enterprises in the same locality, with a consequent saving in transportation, especially on long hauls. The mere existence of a regional authority with planning fuctions may bring to light new ways of utilizing local resources, which were invisible to separate ministries in distant Moscow. Routine decisions, especially those affecting the former local units of different ministries, may now be taken with less delay. It should be easier tc switch unused resources from one enterprise to another. Instances of gains of this character have been reported in the press in the past few months.

Yet there is much evidence that the "reformed" system of organization must lead to new inefficiencies on a substantial scale. In the present author's view, the resulting economic losses may tend to outweigh the gains achieved. The essential difficulty is that 105 regions will be issuing operational orders to their own enterprises without any clear principle or criterion to guide their everyday activity. On paper, they must act in accordance with orders from the appropriate republican government, which must conform to the all-Union plan. In practice, however, they are constantly presented with a range of choices. Most factories of any size require delivery of materials and components from many parts of the USSR, and in turn supply other factories outside their own region. Yet any single *Sovnarkhoz* can see only 1/105th of the whole economic picture, and has no means of appreciating the consequences of its action or inaction outside its own borders. The plan to which it must conform cannot be an adequate guide. As numerous Soviet sources have revealed through the years, the production plans for single enterprises—let alone whole regions—have never been able to cover the day-to-day exigencies and production problems which arise, with the result that plant managers have had to improvise, sometimes resorting to detrimental or even illegal actions, in order to claim fulfillment of planned goals.

Under the new system, plans at the regional level are much less precisely defined than in the past, and the *Sovnarkhozy* are to be given extensive autonomy in fulfilling them. It seems inevitable that they will give priority to the needs of their own regions whenever they can get away with it. Deliveries to other regions will become uncertain, and each *Sovnarkhoz* will endeavor to insure against non-receipt of supplies from outside by trying to produce as much as possible for itself. In short, the regional authorities, no less than the former ministries, will often be operating at cross-purposes. Under the old system, however, the efforts of the ministries were at least more directly related to the national need, which could be more easily observed in

[3] Mukhitdinov in *Pravda,* April 6, 1957; *Partiinaia Zhizn,* No. 7, 1957; and *Pravda Vostoka,* May 29, 1957.

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Moscow (even by a ministry) than in, say, Bryansk or Irkutsk. Under the new system autarchy and "empire-building" must grow, not because of any ill-will on the part of bureaucrats but because they are under pressure to fulfill ambitious regional plans. In an economy based on planning and not on price and market, only the central planners can possibly know what is needed. Yet Gosplan, under the present scheme, must somehow coordinate all the various authorities even though it now has no operational powers. How can confusion and loss be avoided?

NUMEROUS REPORTS from Soviet sources have tended to confirm the above analysis. For example, the chairman of the Belorussian *Sovnarkhoz* complained in an article in *Pravda* of September 2:

> *There are instances when officials bother only about enterprises subordinate to them, and do not think of the difficulties which their irregularities cause for enterprises in other regions. It is necessary to speak about this frankly, so that these defects do not grow worse. . . . We have met clear instances of tendencies towards autarchy.* The Dzerzhinski factory of the Dnepropetrovsk region supplies rolled wire to the Rezhitsa nail-making works. In July the Dzerzhinski factory underfulfilled its plan by 15 percent but sent to Rezhitsa only 300 tons of rolled wire instead of 1,020 tons. When this outrageous fact was investigated, the managers of the Dzerzhinski factory declared that they had orders from the Dnepropetrovsk *Sovnarkhoz* to give priority to enterprises in their own region and to supply them in full. [Emphasis in the original.]

In a similar case cited by the chairman, suppliers from Nikopol arbitrarily cut deliveries of pipes to Minsk by 41 percent, while only a 7 percent cut was made in similar deliveries to Kharkov (which is in the same republic as the supplying factory). Another example comes from Central Asia where *Pravda Vostoka* of March 29, 1957, reported that components from Stalingrad had stopped arriving at the Tashkent farm machinery plant. *Pravda* devoted its editorial of July 25, 1957, to the subject of such defaults in deliveries from one region to another.

The development of a vast and intricate industrial structure inevitably leads to close ties between far-flung enterprises. Under the old system, some of these ties were doubtless irrational as a consequence of the separate operations of ministries, but many were surely sensible. The ministries underwrote important contracts, ensured the availability of materials, interfered to impose priorities when things went wrong. What happens now? Suppose enterprise A wishes to increase its purchases of some component from enterprise B, situated in another region. This may involve alterations in the plans of both factories, additional materials, perhaps more investment. Both regions must be presumed to be having difficulties in finding resources to meet many commitments. How can they find a rational basis for decision? Yet this is a simple example. A large factory, like the Minsk tractor works, draws supplies from roughly a hundred productive units outside its own *Sovnarkhoz* area.

It is the duty of regions to initiate investment plans. But here again, precisely because the local officials can see only the needs of their own regions, there must be strong autarchic tendencies, regardless of economic advantage. This problem was illustrated in *Pravda* of August 17, 1957, in an article by the chairman of the Tula *Sovnarkhoz*. Attacking economists who have argued that the working of the poor-quality coal field in his area is uneconomic, the chairman declared his intention to expand production.

Regional Powers without Rational Directives

These cannot be isolated instances, because they arise out of the very nature of the system. The regime is showing some awareness of the dangers of its new course. Orders have gone out that local sectionalist tendencies *(mestnichestvo)* must be combatted. An instruction has been issued that no enterprise shall be deemed to have fulfilled its plan unless it has complied with its delivery obligations—or more strictly, has made the deliveries "specified in the [state] plan". Numerous articles in the party press have insisted that party organizations, including the party group within each *Sovnarkhoz,* must see to it that the all-Union interest is put before local advantage.

Yet these efforts overlook two things. In the first place, past experience teaches that local party authorities will ignore exhortations for cooperation whenever it seems safe to do so, continuing to favor their own areas of influence at the expense of others. For example, *Partiinaia Zhizn* (No. 7, 1957) reported that the party office at Omsk had forbidden the officials in charge of automobile transport to send trucks to help bring in the harvest in the neighboring Kustanai *oblast,* despite an order to that effect from the government in Moscow; Omsk was to have 100 percent priority, whatever anyone said. Such an attitude is natural when the reputation of the party official depends wholly on what happens in his area of responsibility. He is as anxious to be able to claim the fulfilment of production plans as any factory manager; indeed, Khrushchev himself has been arguing lately in favor of a direct connection between party officials' salaries and the plan results in their areas.

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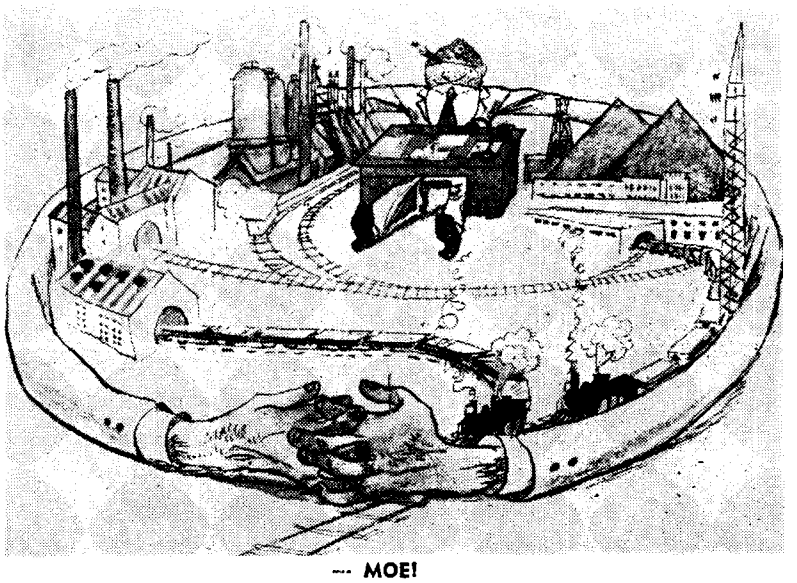
In the second place, how is the all-Union interest to be determined, even assuming that all party and *Sovnarkhoz* officials wish to put it first? In taking everyday decisions, the men on the spot have no compass to guide them except the impetus to fulfil *their own* plans. It is natural that they should tend to give this aim priority, possibly in the honest belief that what is good for Omsk is good for Russia, unless clear orders to the contrary are received from above (and sometimes even the latter prove ineffective, as we have seen).

It might be objected that under the present scheme the necessary wider view will be provided by the republic governments and by the Gosplan. In the author's opinion this will not help much because the giant RSFSR, with its 70 *Sovnarkhozy,* is far too unwieldy. It is not really much easier to manage 70 than 105 regions. Control will be simpler within the smaller national republics, but the all-Union government may find itself facing pressure from local vested interests allied with national feeling, a combination which has long posed special problems for Moscow. As an example, the leaders of the Central Asian republics already have staked a claim for the development of a textile industry.

Khrushchev and his colleagues face a real dilemma. They desire central control, the dominance of the all-Union plan. They have repeatedly expressed their dislike of the term "decentralization". The reform is defined as "bringing the leadership closer to production," the releasing of local initiative to make planning and leadership more efficient in carrying out policies determined in Moscow. The *Sovnarkhoz* is seen as the state's agency in the region. At the same time it is obvious that the necessary efficiency cannot be achieved unless the men on the spot are given a wider range of choice and more initiative in directing economy activity. Yet the more freedom they are granted, the more trouble is likely to occur, *because there are no rational criteria in the regions for deciding between alternative lines of action.* The absence of adequate guide lines to govern local decisions has not escaped the notice of Soviet economists. Thus Gatovski, the editor of *Voprosy Ekonomiki,* wrote in *Kommunist* (No. 9, 1957):

It is necessary to find objective criteria for regional specialization . . . so as to avoid the danger of substituting territorial for departmental barriers [to efficiency].

The situation might become particularly complicated in the case of consumer goods. Under a recent decree, republic governments have been given power to determine the retail prices of a wide range of commodities; they also have been assigned increased responsibility for supplying their populations. They and the *Sovnarkhozy* have wide powers over the production of consumer goods. How is it proposed to link demand and supply? If more furniture is needed in Georgia or Astrakhan, how does this translate itself into a production program in Rostov or Kharkov? The example is by no means a fanciful one; it was used by a writer in *Sovetskaia Targovlia* (No. 5, 1957) in a warning of the adverse effect which republic powers over disposal might have on some sections of the USSR. Georgia, he pointed out, obtains much of its furniture from Rostov. Rostov is in the RSFSR, and there is an unsatisfied demand for furniture in the RSFSR. If Rostov's output were to be wholly diverted to satisfy this demand,



— МОЕ!

(Как некоторые хозяйственники понимают перестройку руководства промышленностью).

—Mine !

(How some economic executives interpret the reorganization of the industrial administration.)

—From Krokodil, Moscow, August 20, 1957.

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Georgia might then have to "import" its furniture from the Baltic States, hardly a rational proceeding.

Such difficulties as these may strengthen the impetus toward regional self-sufficiency—*i.e.* Georgia in this situation would seek to develop a furniture industry of its own. Indeed regions and republics may tend to "import" only what cannot be produced within their own borders, while "exporting" surpluses—that is, behave like planners trying to develop foreign trade.

Prospects for the Future

It does not follow from all this that chaos will develop. The Union government has ample powers to prevent the situation from getting out of hand. It controls the purse-strings through the all-Union budget, and all major investment projects require its approval. It retains control over the allocation of a number of key commodities. All subordinate authorities must obey its orders in the final analysis. Whatever may be the formal powers of the *Sovnarkhozy,* and whatever may be the intentions of the central authorities toward them, their powers can be severely circumscribed if necessary.

What seems most likely, therefore, is that as difficulties become apparent, there will be a gradual return to centralization. Venturing a guess at the pattern of development, there probably will be a continuing stream of complaints reaching Moscow from enterprises and various authorities protesting the delays in production due to irregular arrival of supplies from other regions, asking for help in obtaining this or that item, and so on. The occasional interference of the center will be found insufficient. It will be necessary to set up or strengthen day-to-day organs of supervision to ensure the uninterrupted functioning of at least the priority sectors of the economy.

The heavy burden which must fall on the all-Union Gosplan should lead to a growth in its size, and probably also in its powers. It may set up offices to supervise the planning of large natural regions, like the Urals and the Donbas (such a proposal was made in the course of public discussion in May 1957). Its functional divisions at the center may come to resemble the defunct ministries in operation. It will be found that supplies and disposals of most commodities cannot be left to chance, or to the *Sovnarkhozy.* All-Union organizations will be set up for these purposes, with powers to give binding orders. Their mere existence will greatly strengthen the center in its dealings with the regions, since grants of materials can be made conditional on using them for centrally-defined purposes.

In other words, the center is likely to be compelled to limit greatly the range of choice open to *Sovnarkhozy* in order to ensure that they conform to a national plan, and the latter will have to be more precisely defined. This will limit the extent of confusion and waste—but also will largely nullify the advantages which it was hoped to gain from changes in industrial organization. The total number of bureaucrats controlling the economy, on balance, might actually increase, while essential problems of economic organization will remain unsolved.

The search for a more efficient structure will therefore continue. Some critics of the new system have put forward alternative suggestions; the more promising of these center around granting more powers to enterprise managers and more freedom for the negotiation of contracts between enterprises. For example, in *Voprosy Ekonomiki* (No. 5, 1957) two economists by name Itin and Kamenitser advocate direct links between producing and using enterprises, less interference by the authorities, and the inviolability of contracts. While the regime might come to favor such proposals as the above from the point of view of efficiency, it is caught in a dilemma of its own making. A system based on freely negotiated contracts logically involves freedom to offer a price attractive to the supplying enterprise—*i.e.,* a price system responsive to supply and demand. This is against long-established dogma. To a man like Khrushchev, the right of the party to interfere in the working of economic forces is a *sine qua non,* while the idea that prices and market forces should play a regulatory role in the economy must be denounced as "revisionism" smacking of heresy.

The many actual and potential shortcomings of the recent reorganization should not lead to the conclusion that dire consequences are in store for the Soviet economy in the near future. Soviet industry has grown rapidly in the past despite numerous and grievous errors in planning, and no doubt it will continue to grow. It is possible, however, that the slower pace imposed by present circumstances will cause impatience on the part of the leadership, and will lead to a more insistent searching for reforms promising greater efficiency. This may bring into the open a number of problems of fundamental importance to Soviet society as a whole, since—as the discussion above has sought to demonstrate—there is much about the system and its ideology which obstructs economic development.

Marxist dogma teaches that when the institutional and ideological superstructure of a society conflicts with the needs of the material base, strong forces for change are brought into being. Whether or not one accepts the Marxist formulation, it is not hard to imagine that the basic problems at issue will bring further political conflict as the pressures grow for a more rational basis of economic organization.

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Polish Contradictions

EDITORS' NOTE: One year after the October events, Poland still presents a checkered and, to some extent, contradictory picture: intellectual freedom side by side with party control, hatred of Russia but military and political alliance with Moscow, an official anti-religious ideology fostered by a regime that has granted the Catholic Church rights denied to it in pluralistic and democratic countries (*e.g.*, freedom of religious instruction in the public schools)—paradoxes and contrasts that could be multiplied *ad infinitum*. The articles below depict two facets of this contradictory scene: the first deals with the accomplishments as *vs.* the continuing difficulties of Polish writers and intellectuals; the second reveals the problem of persisting Stalinist influences in Polish life, as epitomized in the peculiar career and personal power of the once Fascist, now Stalinist head of the pseudo-Catholic "movement" Pax—Boleslaw Piasecki. For a more general report on Poland, the reader is referred to "Poland—A Political Glimpse," by Zbigniew Brzezinski, in the preceding issue of this journal (September-October, No. 5, 1957).

Intellectual and Literary Revival in Poland

By Lucienne Rey

THE RECENT SUSPENSION of the crusading Polish student weekly *Po Prostu* (Plain and Simple) has again brought into relief the question asked anxiously by Poles as well as by the world at large: can and will the limited democratization process, ushered in by the dramatic events of October 1956, survive? The present article cannot claim to answer this all-important question. Its purpose is merely to delineate certain aspects of it more clearly—to sketch the history of Poland's intellectual rebellion against Stalinism, to depict the situation as it exists today, and to point out the difficulties and pitfalls, the dangers and obstacles that stand in the way of the Polish intellectual's struggle for greater freedom and dignity. There is no doubt that much has already been accomplished, but it remains to be seen whether the Communist regime will be willing—or be forced—to continue the process of liberation, or whether it will decide to halt and possibly even reverse it.

The Beginnings

The intellectual ferment that spearheaded the October events began unobtrusively in a somewhat out-of-the-way corner of Polish cultural life. Polish intellectuals had their first opportunity to air independent opinions in a press debate that began in the autumn of 1953 and continued until spring of 1954, on the subject of the ossification of the educational system. Among other defects in instruction, they criticized in particular the tendentiousness of courses on literature and literary criticism. From there it was only a step to the critical re-examination of Stalinist aesthetic doctrines, of the literary products of the Stalinist period, and of previous-

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ly-accepted judgments concerning the whole development of Polish literature between the two World Wars.

This step was taken at the June 1954 Congress of Polish Writers, where Mieczyslaw Jastrun and Antoni Slonimski, both writers of considerable renown before the war, ventured to make unprecedentedly daring statements in defiance of the established Stalinist critical canons. Other writers, responding to an inquiry launched by the literary weekly *Nowa Kultura* under the heading, "The Writers Look Back Over The Past Ten Years", sent in comments which were conspicuously lacking in enthusiasm for the literary contributions of the Stalinist era.

The pulse of intellectual dissent quickened when the more radical literary weeklies began publishing short satirical sketches with thinly veiled political implications. Some of these satires, such as "The Lament of the Paper Heads" *(Lament papierowych glow)* by Jerzy Andrzejewski, a lampoon on ludicrous party propaganda, were circulated in typed copies passed secretly from hand to hand. Moscow's initial moves toward emancipation from the Stalin cult gave added verve to the intellectual stirrings in Poland, and the deceased tyrant, without being mentioned by name, was exposed in the press and on the stage to a raillery that encompassed everything connected with his name.

Up to this point the critics had advanced cautiously, resorting to hints, allusions, and secretly-circulated manuscripts, but the regime's inauguration of more liberal policies from January 1955 was the signal for a much more pronounced frankness. *Nowa Kultura* began publishing critical articles which reflected the deep-seated dissatisfaction of the entire Polish population. Adam Wazyk's sensational "Poem for Adults" *(Poemat dla doroslych)*, published in August 1955, marked the first expression by a Polish Communist writer of revulsion at the misery and despair of Polish workers worn out by toil, living in hovels, and waiting and hoping in vain for justice. Wazyk's outburst, amply reported in the Western press, touched off a veritable explosion in the Polish literary world. Despite the reproaches of the party, Wazyk five months later published a sequel entitled *Critique of the Poem for Adults,* a further indictment of the system under which "men lived on dreams, and the lie had become their daily bread." From September 1955 on, *Po Prostu,* a weekly expressing the ideas of the students and young intellectuals, became the standard-bearer of disaffected Poland, attacking the regime with a new spirit of courage and dynamism.

All this paled into insignificance, however, compared to the new tide of intellectual rebellion which swept Poland after the Twentieth CPSU Congress. Khrushchev's "secret report" acknowledging the crimes of Stalin was for many Polish intellectuals an "upheaval," an "earthquake," which sharply accelerated the already growing ferment. The regime found its policy of controlled democratization from above suddenly and hopelessly outdistanced by events.

End of Idols and Dogmas

Scholars, historians, writers and economists began to denounce the misdeeds of "the preceding period" with a new bluntness. Attacking the "cult of personality," certain writers did not even hesitate to challenge a number of the fundamental theses of Marxism-Leninism.[1] One of the most authoritative voices was that of Leopold Infeld, a professor at the University of Warsaw and former co-worker of Albert Einstein in the United States, who began denouncing the "obscurantism" which had developed in Polish science as a result of Soviet influence and control.[2] The poet Julian Przybos assailed the bureaucratic controls imposed by the regime upon cultural institutions, particularly the Writers' Association, for the purpose of "suppressing critical thought and transforming writers into inept instruments of the Propaganda Office." [3]

Economists meanwhile set out to prove that the management of industry and agriculture was irrational and the living standard of the workers abysmal. Their contentions were underlined by revealing factual accounts in the press, which no longer "embellished reality" in the Stalinist tradition but instead pictured conditions in the towns and countryside in the raw. These reports not only revealed the omnipresent poverty of the masses but denounced the abuses of the local party "henchmen," the indifference of the authorities, and the stagnation of social life.[4]

The Poznan workers' uprising of June 1956, which was a direct result of these very conditions, gave a new stimulus to the ferment. But the real intellectual awakening reached its peak only after "the revolution without

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[1] For instance, Professor Jan Kott and the poets Antoni Slonimski and W. Wirpsza at the 19th Council of Culture (March 1956). Also, articles in *Nowa Kultura,* April 8, 1956, and *Przeglad Kulturalny,* April 11, 1956.

[2] Leopold Infeld, "O godnosc nauki" (For the Dignity of Science), *Przeglad Kulturalny,* June 27, 1956.

[3] Julian Przybos, "Dyskusja o Zwiazku Literatow (Discussion on the Association of Writers) written in June and published in *Nowa Kultura,* September 2, 1956.

[4] B. Galeski, "Wies spokojna, wies wesola" (Sweet Countryside, Radiant Countryside), *Przeglad Kulturalny,* June 27, 1956; A. Czarski, "W Kacykowie bez zmian" (No Changes in Kacykow), *Nowa Kultura,* June 17, 1956; J. Piorkowski, "Kult czy tradycja?" (Cult or Tradition?), *Nowa Kultura,* August 5, 1956.

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barricades" of October 1956 had softened the last rigors of Stalinism. The first writings to reflect the new spirit were stories appearing in the press, characterized by almost complete objectivity and frankness. Such were the reports from Polish correspondents in Budapest at the beginning of the Hungarian Revolution.[5] Such were the published results of investigations made by Warsaw newspapers into conditions in various provincial towns. The journalists unleashed their criticism against all the ills inherited from the Stalinist period: the housing shortage, inadequate hospital services, unemployment, power and machinations of the secret police, institutionalized spying and denunciation, and political terror justified by alleged "plots" against the regime. The compulsory optimism of former times was replaced by bitter reflection and honest "self-criticism." The very style of journalistic writing changed: relieved of artifices and grandiloquence, it took on life, color and vividness, at the same time that it became sober and precise.

The Literary Rebirth

The new spirit in journalism also found its way into the intellectual and literary periodicals like *Po Prostu* and *Nowa Kultura,* their number swelled by the appearance of new publications. Consequently, when the Polish Writers' Association met in November 1956 for its first congress after the revolution, it had only to ratify the sweeping transformation that had taken place in the world of letters. The chief obstacle to literary creation, "socialist realism," had already been scornfully condemned as "bureaucratic pressure exerted on the writers." [6] On the opening day of the congress, the central party organ, *Trybuna Ludu,* itself acknowledged that "the writers have not been able to stand this administrative pressure, which threatened all literature with sterility." [7]

The keynote of the congress was sounded by Leon Kruczkowski, then still president of the Writers' Association, who declared that "false concepts and bureaucratic methods have encouraged glibness . . ., corrupted the writers, particularly the young people . . ., [and created] a school of cynicism." [8] Another speaker, the poet Jastrun reminded his listeners that they were not yet safely through the storm:

> **In the recent period, liberty meant servitude, sovereignty meant submission, and orthodoxy meant abasement. Totalitarianism, whatever its form, corrupted style . . . The totalitarian manner of thinking persists to this day; it is this that prevents the emancipation of the word from the oppression of authority, even if it is an enlightened absolutism.[9]**

Other spokesmen at the congress stressed the unhappy consequences for Polish culture of the country's enforced isolation from the West during the Stalinist period. In this area, however, they took heart from the fact that the barriers had already been largely broken down, promising an opportunity to further the development of close cultural contacts with Western countries. The progress achieved in this direction has, in fact, been one of the most interesting aspects of the new era in Poland.

France has naturally been the first pole of attraction, as much by reason of old tradition as of the affinity and mutual admiration which link the two peoples. French authors have been experiencing an extraordinary vogue among Polish readers. Translations of some classics as well as of contemporary works banned during the Stalinist period, particularly of André Gide, François Mauriac and André Maurois, are being republished. On the library shelves one now finds translations of almost all the currently popular French writers: Albert Camus, Simone de Beauvoir, Sartre, Vailland, even Françoise Sagan. The plays of d'Anouilh have been presented since last autumn on the stages of Warsaw and Cracow, inaugurating a real international theatrical festival in which not only French but other Western authors have been represented—Beckett, Cocteau, Kesserling *(Arsenic and Old Lace)* and Agatha Christie. There have also been visits to Warsaw by the Comédie Française and the dramatic troupe of Laurence Olivier.

The new interest in American arts and literature is particularly significant. The Cleveland Symphony Orchestra, which recently visited Poland, was received with exceptional enthusiasm. Translations of American authors—notably Steinbeck, Hemingway, Wilder and Margaret Mitchell—are being printed in remarkably large volume for a country that suffers from a paper shortage (*Gone With the Wind* was run off in 50,000 copies). The literary weeklies, which continuously keep their readers informed of literary activities abroad, make more and more frequent mention of American poets and writers. [10]

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[5] W. Woroszylski, "Dziennik Wegierski" (Hungarian Diary), *Nowa Kultura,* November 25 and December 2, 1956; R. Jurys, "Poznan i Budapeszt" (Poznan and Budapest), *Zycie Warszawy,* November 23, 1956.

[6] Przybos, *op cit.*

[7] *Trybuna Ludu,* November 29, 1956.

[8] Leon Kruczkowski's speech, published in *Nowa Kultura,* December 9, 1956. Kruczkowski, a faithful party writer, is the author of numerous novels and plays, the most recent of which, *Julius and Ethel,* is based on the Rosenberg case. Since the congress he has been ousted as head of the Writers' Association and also from the weekly, *Nowa Kultura.*

[9] For Jastrun's speech, see *Nowa Kultura,* Dec. 9, 1956.

[10] *Nowa Kultura* recently published two poems by Carl Sandburg and reprinted an article from the *New Leader* (New York), a contribution by Norman Podhoretz.

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Notwithstanding the customary attacks on American "imperialism," still voiced in some strictly political writings, Polish newspapers and literary publications reflect a growing curiosity about the United States. In a series of articles for a Warsaw daily, Grzegorz Jaszunski related his impressions of an American tour which included Washington, New York, Los Angeles, Chicago and Detroit. Certain of his observations were open to debate, but in general he tried to picture American life with careful objectivity, not neglecting to mention the well-being of the workers, including specifically those of Polish origin.[11]

Recent Literary Trends

The new trends in Polish literature are evident in both choice of subjects and treatment. Understandably enough, themes drawn from the recent past have engaged the attention of writers more than any others. Thus, the first works published since the summer of 1956 have a clearly political character.

The themes include the pernicious effects of the activities of misguided student *aktivs,* [12] Communist discrimination against former fighters in the wartime Polish resistance against the Germans, and police terror in general.[13] A recent novel by Jerzy Andrzejewski, *Darkness Covers the Earth,* has its setting in Spain at the time of the Holy Inquisition, but it is clearly meant to assail the evils of the Stalinist period in Poland. The atmosphere of terror and the personality of the Grand Inquisitor, lying in wait for men suspected of the least heresy, leave no doubt on this score. [14]

Far more direct and explicit is a book *(The Bad One)* by the young writer and journalist, Leopold Tyrmand. First published in late 1955, prior to the more dramatic renaissance, it was republished in 1956 and became a best seller. The novel deals with a topic of current importance and interest—namely, the activities of the young street ruffians (officially termed "hooligans") who have constituted a perennial problem in postwar Poland. Tyrmand views the problem in a way that contrasts sharply with the official version. He paints a startling picture of Warsaw's underworld, where an organized gang disguised as a "work cooperative" spreads dis-

Reflections of a Writer

I still cannot control my burning anger when face to face with evil and stupidity. "Stupidity is eternal, it cannot die." This saying is of no help at all. Today I read that a certain young critic took issue with advocates of a certain type of realism. Does he really think that it pays to enter into polemics on this subject; doesn't he know what it is all about? One of the most monstrous products of totalitarian education, among others, is the art of dissimulation, an art mastered so effectively that it often succeeds in blurring the line between reality and camouflage. I find this type of pretense, demanded of us until recently, particularly hateful. In some countries, this pretense has assumed thoroughly repugnant features. An old writer, who has grayed in the dangerous game of saving his own skin—he who knows the hellish depths of fear, of compromise, of self-degradation—simulates a young man, concerned about the loftiest ideals of mankind. This does not come easily to anybody. Many a candle he burned, before he made his first step. As soon as he took it, he was lost.

* * *

Here comes a young critic who, with one sweeping gesture, blots out the work of a poet, the product of years of artistic endeavor. "Even if his works have any value, they should be annihilated, removed, so as to pave the way for the new literature."

So, too, spoke the directors of our cultural life at the beginning of the Stalinization of Polish literature. "We must annihilate him, even though his works have a certain value, we must break him, remove him, thus paving the way for our young poetry, which will sing the glories of our achievements and the glories of our government agencies with *their* achievements, and other agencies at the top." In the meantime, poetry has survived. Poetry *will* survive.

—From "Fragmenty" (Fragments), by Mieczyslaw Jastrun, Przeglad Kulturalny *(Warsaw), Sept. 19-25, 1957.*

[11] "Return From America," *Zycie Warszawy,* December 9, 1956, and January 9, 1957.

[12] In *The Musician,* by Josef Kusmierek, a militant zealot of the Communist Youth causes the mental collapse of an old schoolmistress and the dismissal of two teachers.

[13] *The Sargasso Sea,* by Aleksander Scibor Rylski.

[14] J. Andrezejewski, *Ciemnosci kryja ziemie,* Warsaw, published by Czytelnik, June 1957. On the threshold of death, taking stock of the crimes he has committed, the Grand Inquisitor says to his disciple and successor: "We are not allowed to delude ourselves any further. Our power is illusory and our strength is only apparent. . . . We have made of the world a prison and a dungeon. Catastrophe is inevitable. There is no longer either faith or hope. We have broken men, destroyed their spirit and their souls. We are hated and scorned. Nothing can be saved from this dark madness. Other ways of salvation must be sought. We ourselves have to destroy that which is condemned. We can no longer . . . delude ourselves into thinking that the mistakes which we made are due only to the methods of the exercise of power."

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order and defies the police. Without making any explicit political points, the author succeeds in presenting a haunting indictment of a system which has given birth to a group of social outcasts possessing no moral values, cynical, embittered, and poverty-stricken.[15]

The young authors who have emerged in recent months, whatever their literary genres, are fiercely opposed to any controls on literature. Not only do they steer clear of the clichés of "socialist realism", but some take delight in deliberately violating established Communist literary taboos. Production is now replaced by love, and politics by lyrical reflections; the evil of living and the evil of loving, prostitution and alcoholism, the misery and promiscuity engendered by inadequate housing—these are the subjects once spurned and now openly treated. It is principally the young authors of the trend represented by Marek Hlasko, Monika Kotowska, and the poet, Jerzy Harasymowicz, who excel in the graphic description of daily life seen in its dark and brutal aspects, and in the precise observation of details, replacing psychological analysis. They seem to be under the strong influence of certain American writers—Caldwell and Faulkner in particular. Hlasko, perhaps the leading member of this school, is the author of several novels distinguished for their vivid, direct and incisive style. He does not hesitate to describe scenes and conversations full of brutal realism. The lives and loves of his characters are saturated with a despair from which alcohol is the only escape. Despite the protests of the more conservative writers, Hlasko's work has been recognized as an essentially honest artistic portrayal of conditions in contemporary Poland.[16]

The new women writers depict the same painful aspects of life, though with a lighter touch. Monika Kotowska writes of love wilting for want of a home *(Saturday)* and ending in disillusionment, bitterness and suffering because of poverty *(A Kiosk at the End of the World)*.[17] Maria Paczowska pictures a worker driven by his dismal existence and the promiscuity of the family hovel to seek oblivion in the cafés and liquor *(The Palms)*.[18]

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[15] Leopold Tyrmand: *Zly,* Czytelnik Warsaw, 1955. 2nd edition, 1956.

[16] One of his stories, *The Noose,* introduces the reader into the hallucinatory world of an incurable alcoholic. Another, *The Eighth Day of the Week,* depicts the wretched life of a Warsaw family and the trials of a young couple in search of a place for their secretive love-making, terminating in the young girl breaking away and, in bitterness, giving herself to the first comer.

[17] Monika Kotowska, "Sobota," in *Nowa Kultura,* November 18, 1956; "Kiosk na koncu swiata," *idem,* March 10, 1957.

[18] Maria Paczowska, "Palmy," in *Nowa Kultura,* March 10, 1957.

It is not only the subject matter, but the whole tone of the new literature which is striking. There is a pervading atmosphere of deep sadness and melancholy, of nostalgia and of the pessimism of men who have lost their illusions and no longer wish to be carried along by a spurious hope. These writings, with their direct language, their facile and lively style, express genuine sentiments, real states of mind, authentic situations. After the novels and poems of the "rose-colored glasses" or optimism-on-order period, Polish literature seems to have entered a phase of "black writing." A normal reaction to the past, this phase may be expected to last for some time. It may very well contain, however, the seeds of a more happy and truly optimistic flowering of Polish literature.

Political Tendencies

The official view which holds that there are only two ideological trends in Poland, Communist and Catholic, between which floats a formless "mass of people who do not belong to any party," is just as unrealistic with respect to the political scene as it is for the literary life of the country. Actually, the "formless mass" embraces many whose politico-philosophical concepts, though as remote from dialectical materialism as from the spiritualism of the Catholics, are far from "formless." These concepts are often expressed by writers who disclaim kinship with either of the officially recognized trends.

The literary world is still in the process of reorienting itself, and the political situation remains too fluid for the writers to take unequivocal positions. The most one can do is to point to certain characteristic traits rather than identify distinct groups. By and large, those writers who made a name for themselves between the two World Wars—such as Antoni Slonimski, Maria Dabrowska, Julian Przybos and T. Peiper—and who kept their dignity during the darkest moments of the Stalinist period, remain attached to liberal thought, more or less colored with socialist ideas. They have exercised, albeit discreetly, a strong influence on their colleagues and were instrumental in preparing the ground for greater freedom of expression.

The authors whose production dates from the first years of "People's Poland" are divided into two groups: the Catholics, represented by the weeklies *Kierunki* and *Tygodnik Powszechny,* and the "revisionists." The latter, whom their opponents call "the enraged," embrace those Communist writers and publicists who played an important role in Gomulka's victory. They are opposed to dogmatism, whether Marxist, Leninist or any other. They

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advocate a strictly critical approach and place great emphasis on the moral aspect of social and political problems. Led by Leszek Kolakowski, a talented young philosopher and political writer, the "revisionists" include such vigorous writers and journalists as W. Woroszylski, R. Zimand, K. T. Toeplitz and A. Braun. They are not however, a homogeneous group, for there are various shades of opinion among them. Through their courageous writing in *Po Prostu,* and *Nowa Kultura,* as well as in the daily *Zycie Warszawy,* they have been exercising a strong influence on Polish intellectual life.

Though instrumental in Gomulka's victory, the "revisionists" now find themselves at odds with his evident reluctance to proceed more boldly and unequivocally along the road of liberalization. Today, the regime's cautiously conservative policies have lost the support of the majority of intellectuals, and few writers of real standing in the literary world are to be found in the pro-government camp. Those writers who do represent the official viewpoint are, for the most part, party journalists and polemicists such as L. Kruczkowski, J. Putrament and S. Zolkiewski, grouped around the weekly *Polityka.*

The youngest Polish writers under the age of 30, who were educated entirely in Communist schools, completely ignore doctrinal political problems in their writings. Given the oppressive sterility of ideological "discussions" in the Stalin era, their aversion to politics can easily be understood.

Continuing Difficulties

It was undoubtedly during and immediately after the October events that Polish writers and intellectuals attained their greatest freedom of speech and expression. Later, the Gomulka regime thought it necessary to apply the brakes and revived, though less rigorously than

TWO VOICES ON POLISH CULTURE

The Bureaucrat . . .

The Eighth Plenum of the Communist Party broke with the distortions and mistakes of the past not for the purpose of weakening the role of the party in any sector of public life, but—on the contrary—in order to restore to the party its real function, not of administrative, but of ideological and political activity in every sector. Can this aim be accomplished by the almost complete withdrawal from a sector as important as culture? . . . If the answer is no—and it certainly is no—then we must initiate a new party policy on this front—a policy that is free of dogmatism and falseness, a policy that is designed to benefit socialism and our national culture. . . .

In literature and the arts, in books and journals, in the cinema and theatre, socialism can find an important ally. But it may also find there a source of additional, and hardly negligible, difficulties. It is the task of the party to see to it that this *difficult* ally become an ally nonetheless. This requires the *existence of the party on the cultural front.*

—Leon Kruczkowski "A Difficult But Indispensible Ally," Trybuna Ludu, June 3, 1957.

. . . And the Artist

I cannot imagine what, under our circumstances, could be the meaning of "cultural policy" of the government and party—aside from ensuring the most general conditions for the growth and popularization of culture and art. Representatives of the party may express sympathy or antipathy towards given cultural manifestations, but the concrete and practical implementation of these manifestations lies and must lie in the hand of individual artists and artistic media. Among such media there can also be the editorial boards of newspapers and magazines. They do not fulfill this function, however, if, instead of paying concrete attention to cultural matters, they issue apocalyptic declarations and appeals.

—W. W. in Nowa Kultura, June 30, 1957.

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before, censorship controls and restrictions applied through the state publishing houses. Marks such as B-27, B-15, or B-1, discreetly appearing in small type at the bottom of a daily or periodical publication, or on the last page of a book, indicate that the text has passed the censorship. Despite the reduced severity of the controls, articles considered undesirable for one reason or another are still being barred from newspapers and periodicals. In the recent case of *Po Prostu*, the whole publication was suspended, and the editor, Elegiusz Lasota, as well as nine other members of the staff, were expelled from the United Workers' [Communist] Party. Some books are also refused publication, though less openly: the publishing houses can always turn down a manuscript that is too daring by resorting to such convenient pretexts as shortage of paper, lack of funds, and so on.

While the regime has re-imposed curbs on freedom of expression in print, it has not actively interfered with the new freedom of thought prevailing within the walls of Polish universities. A number of professors dismissed between 1947 and 1952 because of their political "undesirability" have now been reinstated; others have been given positions in the Academy, in archives, libraries and other cultural institutions. Through its own vigilant "guardians" in the universities, the regime continues to keep a weather-eye on what is being taught, but in general both teachers and students in the institutions of higher learning have enjoyed a substantially greater measure of academic freedom than in the past.

On the other hand, censorship of scholarly and scientific works, particularly those in the field of the humanities, is still very much in existence. In fact, such works must also be passed by the Polish Academy of Science, which has dominated the scientific life of the country since 1952. The control exercised by the Academy of Science remains much more bureaucratic than that of the Writers' Association in the literary field, headed as the latter organization now is by the liberal-minded poet Antoni Slonimski. Some scientists and scholars, though willing to recognize the Academy as a central institute of science, are demanding that it be "rid of politics" and "debureaucratized." Others are seeking to reestablish the former Academy of Letters and Science, an autonomous body founded in Cracow in 1873, with a distinguished record in behalf of Polish science.[19]

The intellectual rebirth, achieved in Poland despite all opposition, is now again being exposed to bureaucratic pressures. To be sure, these pressures are not cast in the Stalanist mold; yet in some essential respects they bear a startling resemblance to it.

Before Gomulka's victory, the Polish writer was a virtual lackey of the regime. Deprived of any intellectual or artistic freedom, he was expected to serve the party cause by producing crude and blatant propaganda works, written in accord with the principles of "socialist realism." Quite obviously, Gomulka and the ruling party do not desire a return to this sterile and debilitating phase of Polish culture. At the same time, they are opposed to "cultural anarchy," which inevitably fosters tendencies hostile to one-party rule. Consequently, they have now launched in the name of "the building of socialism" and in the ostensible "interest of the masses" a campaign for "a cultural choice" and a "cultural policy." The writer's duty is no longer crudely defined as one of total, unquestioning loyalty to the party, but rather is expounded in terms of his obligation to the "higher good" of the "masses."

Thus, the present Minister of Higher Education, Stefan Zolkiewski, recently expressed himself in favor of "complete liberty for the artist," but added significantly: "The artist must, however, consider that the dissemination of culture at the level of the masses imposes at the outset the standards of the masses." [20] Leon Kruczkowski, after his expulsion from the revisionist *Nowa Kultura,* published articles in the party daily expressing similar ideas.[21] Both writers bemoan the absence of a "cultural policy" and contend that this will lead to the "commercialization of art" and a "lowering of literary standards." The euphemisms they employ hardly disguise their true objective: they are hankering for a partial return to the "good old days" when the writer was an "ally" of the regime, and his literary work a form of political propaganda.

It goes without saying that the new attempts to bind the writer to the party and state meet with vigorous and bitter opposition on the part of the Polish intelligentsia.

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[19] In 1952 the Communists arbitrarily closed the old Academy, pillaged its records, collections and property, which they turned over to a new Academy (P.A.N.) patterned on the Soviet model and subject to governmental control. On February 16, 1957, some members of the old Academy, meeting in Cracow, declared that it had never ceased to exist since it had not been dissolved, and decided to resume its interrupted scientific activity. But the P.A.N. did not concede defeat. To check the initiative of the Cracow professors, it created a branch in that city, directed by its agents. The battle of the Polish scientists is not yet at an end, and it is impossible at the moment to foresee the outcome. The P.A.N. has the support of the party and the government. But it has a poor reputation and neither the traditions nor the long activity of the Cracow Academy.

[20] "Need For a Cultural Choice," *Polityka,* March 27, 1957.

[21] "A Difficult and Indispensable Ally," *Trybuna Ludu,* June 3, 1957. The two articles have provoked a lively debate. Several writers have replied in *Nowa Kultura* (April 14, June 16, July 7, 1957.)

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Mindful of the past, Polish writers feel nothing but aversion toward a "committed literature" in any shape or form. One Polish writer, taking issue with the asseverations of Kruczkowski *et al.,* wrote recently:

I agree that we face the problem of a struggle against yellow literature, pseudo-artistic products and commercialization of art. I agree that the ideological colorlessness of some of our literary and artistic creations is an expression of the profound ideological and esthetic crisis among many of our artists.

However, he added, "it must be understood that this crisis is a reflection of the political crisis from which we are emerging," and that the only solution for it lies in "intelligent patience and comprehension of the autonomous laws of art," and not in an attempt to transplant rules of political struggle into the field of art and literature. The writer continued:

The merits of a work of art can be determined only by public discussion, by a confrontation between the artistic product and its recipient, the judgment of contemporaries and, in the final perspective, the judgment of history. . . . The artistic universe possesses . . . even though it emerges from an objective reality, its own artistic reality and its own autonomous laws. And although an artistic work exists very concretely in our reality, or in our future, it never for a moment ceases to function according to its own unique laws. Even as a political statement it only exerts an influence on society to the extent that it is a work of art. . . . Politics, then, is not alien to art . . . but it must be subordinate to it.[22]

The idea that the esthetic and the political are separate worlds and that if politics is to figure at all in art it must be subordinated to purely esthetic laws is so revolutionary in the Communist universe as to stagger the imagination. These are of course, truisms that were discovered, discussed and accepted by Western thinkers a long time ago (and by Leon Trotsky, be it noted, in his *Literature and the Revolution* thirty years ago), but in a Communist country they constitute a profound and radical break with Stalinist dogma and, as such, are refreshingly new and startling. They constitute proof of the survival of artistic integrity despite totalitarian repression, proof that artists and writers under Communist rule are continuing their struggle for greater freedom of thought and expression.

[22] Wlodzimierz Sokorski "Not These Fronts" *Nowa Kultura,* July 7, 1957.

Strange Alliance:

Piasecki and the Polish Communists

By Alexander Korab

ON OCTOBER 16, 1956, just before the dramatic events of Poland's anti-Stalinist revolution, the attention of the Warsaw public was attracted by an article which appeared in the newspaper *Slowo Powszechne,* organ of the pseudo-Catholic *Pax* movement, under the signature of the one-time Polish Falangist leader and present head of *Pax,* Boleslaw Piasecki. Entitled "Instynkt Panstwowy" (State Instinct), the article was a deviously-phrased but nonetheless transparent attempt to discourage current tendencies pointing toward a drastic reshaping of the political system and leadership of Communist Poland. Especially significant was the author's warning that any "irresponsible" Polish move in this direction would very likely precipitate measures of a military nature "for the brutal realization of the interests of the state." It was perfectly clear that what Piasecki meant to imply was forcible Soviet intervention.

Three days later events began bearing out this threatening "prediction." On October 19, in the midst of the plenary Central Committee session held to install Gomulka as head of a sharply-reoriented "national Communist" regime, the Committee itself was startled

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by the sudden arrival in Warsaw of the top Soviet leaders. While Khrushchev and his associates sought to block Gomulka's accession to power by means of verbal pressure and intimidation, their words were fortified by threatening movements of Soviet troops. In the end the Soviet leaders backed down and Poland's historic "break with the past" was peacefully accomplished, but it was evident that armed Soviet intervention had been averted only by a narrow margin.

One effect of this striking sequence of events was to bring into somewhat clearer focus the nature and purpose of Piasecki's warning of October 16. That it had sprung solely from the author's own political "instinct" was patently absurd; in fact, its issuance on the eve of the Soviet leaders' sudden descent upon Warsaw pointed strongly to the conclusion that Piasecki must already have been advised of Moscow's intentions at a time when these intentions were still unknown to the Polish Communist leaders directing the move toward transformation of the regime. A logical corollary to this conclusion was that Piasecki, in publishing his veiled threat, had willingly acted as Moscow's foil out of his own desire to deter the impending anti-Stalinist reformation in Poland.

Piasecki's strange devotion to the cause of preserving Polish Stalinism had, indeed, been manifest long before it was re-underlined by his role in the events of October 1956. The story of how this acknowledged leader of prewar Polish fascism became an open ally and servant of the postwar Stalinist regime is the record of one of the most striking and curious phenomena in the politics of Communist Poland. It is at the same time an illuminating case study of the ideological kinship which —despite the bitter struggle waged between the two systems—links the fascist and Communist forms of totalitarianism.

The Falanga in Prewar Poland

Born in a family of the old Polish aristocracy, Piasecki was still a young law student at the University of Warsaw when he began his political activity in ONR, the youth organization affiliated with the conservative Polish National Democratic Party. His thinking bore the strong imprint of the new totalitarian political philosophies gripping Germany and Italy, and in 1934, at the age of 20, he led a rebellion in the ONR which resulted in the secession of his fascist-minded group to form the "National Democratic Falanga." Piasecki's followers saw in him a spellbinding "Fuehrer quality," and even his physical attributes seemed to cast him preeminently for the leadership of a movement inspired by nationalist and racist ideas. Impressively built, blond and blue-eyed, with a sharply-chiselled, masculine face, he might have served as the prototype of the Nazis' "Aryan man"—as, indeed, he became the Falangists' prototype of the ideal Slav or Pole.

The political ideas embodied in the Falanga movement were first outlined by Piasecki in a pamphlet published in 1935.[1] Pointing to bolshevism, nazism and fascism as the dominant political trends of the twentieth century, he held that they marked the abandonment of the liberalism of the preceding epoch and asserted that Poland, too, if it was to meet successfully the test of history, must undergo a drastic revolutionary transformation not only of its political structure but of the national character of its people. It was the historic mission of the Falanga, declared Piasecki, to provide the leadership and driving force of this revolutionary movement. Its essential political goal would be the creation of a totalitarian state in which supreme power would be vested in a single party representing the "general political organization of the Polish nation" and directed by a tightly-organized political élite. Piasecki however, imparted a unique character to his ideal totalitarian system for Poland, envisaging it within the framework of a new Catholicism stressing nationalistic goals.

Two years later these ideas were given more concrete formulation in the so-called "green program" of the Falanga. Piasecki's central concept of a synthesis of Catholicism and fascist totalitarianism was expressed in the opening declaration of principles, which stated that "work for the nation represents the path to God." The rest of the program was closely patterned after Nazi policies. It again called for the exercise of supreme political power by a single party representing the whole nation, for a controlled economy and nationalization of basic industries and of the wholesale trade, for cultural regimentation, expulsion of the Jews from Poland, and thorough "Polonization" of other national minorities.

In its internal organization and discipline, the Falanga adhered strictly to the "Fuehrer principle" of the Nazis, while externally it adopted all the pomp and panoply characteristic of totalitarian movements. The element of nationalism was emphasized by the use of flags and patriotic slogans and by the adoption as the Falangist symbol of the sword of King Boleslaw I, the founder of the first independent Polish kingdom in the Middle Ages. Members of the Falanga wore green-shirted uniforms and adopted a distinctive salute as an official form of greeting.

[1] Boleslaw Piasecki, *Duch Czasow Nowych a Ruch Mlodych* (The Spirit of the New Era and the Youth Movement), Warsaw, 1935.

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Despite Piasecki's efforts to attract Polish youth through this combination of nationalistic display and a radical social program, the Falanga failed to achieve the rapid expansion that he anticipated. He therefore resorted to another familiar Nazi tactic, organizing "combat groups" within the Falanga to engage primarily in the commission of anti-Semitic acts of violence.[2] At the same time, the Falanga launched a systematic campaign of infiltration in the rival youth organizations affiliated with both the opposition and pro-government parties.

Piasecki's greatest opportunity to advance the political aims of the Falanga came in 1937 when Premier Marshall Edward Smigly-Rydz and other members of the Polish government sanctioned the formation of a government-sponsored "Association of Young Poles" (ZMP) under predominantly Falangist leadership. Jerzy Rutkowski, Piasecki's closest collaborator, was made its head, and Falanga members dominated the executive committee.[3] Before long, however, Piasecki's immoderate attempts to gain complete control of the ZMP caused the government leaders who had sponsored its formation to withdraw their support. The frustrated "Fuehrer" promptly proclaimed that the Jews and Free Masons had obstructed the great goal of a Polish national revival.

Penchant for the "New Orders"

During the critical period between 1937 and the outbreak of war in 1939, Piasecki's friendship toward the Nazis was reflected in an open propaganda campaign conducted by the Falanga against the thesis that Hitler constituted a threat to Poland. The Nazi invasion consequently dealt a severe blow to the public reputation of the Falangist movement, but it did not deter Piasecki from a prompt attempt to negotiate an accord with Poland's conquerors. According to the testimony of ex-Falangists who were then his close associates, Piasecki conferred with representatives of the Wehrmacht soon after the fall of Warsaw and proposed that the Falanga, in return for Nazi political support, build a strong anti-Communist movement in Poland assuring Germany of Polish backing in an eventual showdown with the Soviet Union.

This proposal was at first accepted, and the Germans even held a number of conferences with leaders of the Falanga's combat groups. The Wehrmacht, however, soon yielded control of occupied Poland to the Nazi Party and the Gestapo, which not only disavowed the arrangement with Piasecki but placed him under arrest late in 1939. He remained under detention until April 1940 when his release was effected, reportedly through the personal intervention of Mussolini.

Having been rebuffed in his efforts to make a deal with the Nazis, Piasecki now turned against them and entered the resistance. The name of the Falanga was changed to the "National Confederation," and its partisan groups under Piasecki's direction eventually began operating in the eastern sector of Poland which the Soviet Union had seized under the 1939 Nazi-Soviet partition agreement but which the Germans later invaded in their assault on the USSR in June 1941. Piasecki's partisans, however, fought not only the Germans but also Soviet guerrilla forces, wiping out several Soviet groups during 1943-44. He was consequently placed under advance sentence of death by the Soviet secret police.

Piasecki's luck appeared to have run out at last when, in the spring of 1945, NKVD agents apprehended and arrested him in a Warsaw suburb. Instead of carrying out the death sentence, however, the NKVD mysteriously gave him his freedom. There has never been any authenticated disclosure of how this sudden reversal came about. One widely-rumored version has it that the decision resulted from an understanding reached in a lengthy and highly secretive night meeting between Piasecki and a high-ranking NKVD emissary from Moscow.[4] Another account credits the intervention of Jerzy Borejsza, then cultural affairs chief in the Polish CP, who reportedly persuaded the NKVD authorities that Piasecki would be valuable to the party as an instrument for influencing the Polish Catholics.

WHATEVER the precise facts were, Piasecki's later activities left no doubt that a full understanding had been reached between himself and the Communists. It would be superficial, however, to view this agreement simply as a mutually advantageous bargain whereby Piasecki pledged his services in return for his life. Much more than that, it signified the finding of an ideological common ground and a basis for positive cooperation between his fascist political philosophy and Stalinist

[2] The most notorious case of anti-Semitic terrorism was a Falangist attack on a Jewish bank in Warsaw in 1937. The government failed to prosecute those responsible with any real vigor, probably because of Piasecki's personal contacts with the incumbent Minister of Justice. Zygmunt Przetakiewicz, who commanded the Falanga "combat groups," is now chief editor of the *Pax* daily organ, *Slowo Powszechne.*

[3] Rutkowski presently is director of the *Pax* organization for Warsaw.

[4] This emissary is variously rumored to have been General Ivan Serov, now chairman of the State Security Commission of the USSR Council of Ministers, or a certain Colonel Ivanov, then an influential NKVD official.

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communism. The Polish Communist journalist, Leopold Tyrmand, in an article published shortly after the October 1956 revolution, analyzed this essential aspect of the 1945 understanding in the following words:

> One cannot but presume that the Stalinist party to the agreement did not merely make demands upon the fascist party but also tried to convince him. It may likewise be presumed that the fascist party not only made offers but also put forward demands. In any case the transaction was concluded and an understanding reached. The Stalinist party—as later became publicly manifest—granted Piasecki the right to the superstructure, [that is, the right] to form an ideology of his own that would uphold the new situation, to preserve within this ideology elements dear to the heart of a Pole and of the totalitarian, indeed even to retain certain Nietzsche-like characteristics of the elite, including the "will to power." It may be that the Stalinist party held out to him the delusion of Poland's international importance in the new system, a delusion which enabled Piasecki to formulate his subsequent observations on the new role of the Polish state under the condition of surrendered sovereignty. As a *quid pro quo* [the Stalinist party] undoubtedly demanded complete and unqualified approval of the basic principles and methods of his totalitarianism. I believe that such a basis of understanding appealed to the totalitarian and nationalist Piasecki. Men of his kind, for whom all morality in politics is a harmful myth, attach no importance to the breaking-point at which tactics change qualitatively into a new political content and approval of methods transforms itself generically into a new ideology. Piasecki could accept the methods without the flicker of an eyelash, for it was a wonderful way to assure the masterly achievement of the single-party hegemony which he had so long dreamed of but never attained. . . . Thereafter he stood at the disposition of the then Polish Ministry of State Security. [5]

The Wave of the Future

The new phase of Piasecki's life and political activity began in the winter of 1946 when he and some of his closest associates from the days of the Falanga launched a "Catholic social" weekly called *Dzis i Jutro* (Today and Tomorrow).[6] Despite Stalinist ideological support, the start was not easy. Catholic circles, which had viewed Piasecki's prewar attempts to combine Catholicism and fascism with almost unanimous mistrust, again rebuffed him. The so-called "middle-class parties," which were still relatively strong at this time, also looked upon his renewed activity with distaste because they saw in it a threat of dangerous competition. Finally, Piasecki's pact with the Stalinists evoked the suspicion and hostility of the many Polish Communists who did not want to see Stalin's coercive regime and the cynical policies of Moscow's proconsuls in Warsaw made the basis of their own program.

For his own part, Piasecki was clever enough to proceed with caution and restraint. Przetakiewicz, Rutkowski and the other ex-Falangists whom he installed in key positions on *Dzis i Jutro* kept themselves unobtrusively in the background, and a respectable public front was created by winning over, through Piasecki's careful tactics, two outstanding Catholic writers and a few younger members of well-known aristocratic families identified with the prewar Catholic conservative camp. Until 1949, the *Dzis i Jutro* group displayed equal discretion in avoiding any open advertisement of its close Communist connections. There was a noticeable tendency to cite the French "social Catholics" like Emanuel Mounier. Nevertheless, Piasecki's articles betrayed occasional hints of his ambition to attain a dominant role in Polish Catholicism under Communist auspices.

The triumph of Stalinism in Poland marked the beginning of Piasecki's most flourishing period. The *Pax* Society, organized in 1949 to serve as the new nerve-center of "progressive Catholic" activities, was more than a political party: it was another "movement" which not only acquired its own representation in the *Sejm* and commanded an extensive press organization, but even built up its own industrial enterprises. Piasecki's rising affluence and prestige were reflected in the transfer of his headquarters to a luxurious building on Warsaw's Motowska Street.

As Leopold Tyrmand has correctly observed, *Pax's* greatest gains among Polish Catholics coincided with the 1952-54 period of intensified church conflict which followed Cardinal Wyszynski's imprisonment.[7] This period also saw Piasecki shed the mask of "social Catholicism" and dedicate his whole movement to the service of the Stalinist system. He not only endorsed all the political, social and economic attributes of Stalinism, but affirmed that it was the sacred duty of Polish Catholics to uphold this triumphant ideology of the modern era. Piasecki's new line naturally brought him into serious conflict with the Polish Church hierarchy and with the Vatican, which placed his writings and *Dzis i Jutro* on the Index. The regime, on the other hand, gave him its full support, rewarded him with the highest decorations, and facilitated the growth of *Pax's* economic resources.[8] Emissaries of *Pax* visited

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[5] Leopold Tyrmand, in the Polish weekly, *Swiat*, No. 47, November 18, 1956.

[6] Because of its Stalinist orientation, this publication soon earned the popular nickname of *Dzis i Zawtra*, combining the Polish word for "today" with the Russian word for "tomorrow".

[7] Tyrmand, *op. cit.*

[8] In the spring of 1953, for example, when the last independent Catholic periodical in Poland, *Tygodnik Powszechny* in Cracow, was closed down by order of the secret police, its offices were handed over to *Pax*. It has been revived since the October revolution.

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various West European countries and pretended to speak as the authorized representatives of Polish Catholicism.

In the decisive intra-party struggle which gathered momentum in Poland following the Twentieth CPSU Congress, Piasecki ranged himself unequivocally on the side of his Stalinist protectors. He acted in close cooperation with the leading members of the Natolin group and gave the fullest support to their efforts to block Gomulka's return to power. His role in the last-ditch defense of Stalinism was conclusively underlined by his article of October 16 in *Slowo Powszechne,* which implied that the price of an attempt to change the existing order would be Soviet military intervention.

Decline and Resistance

As a result of his open hostility to the aims of the revolution, the successful overthrow of Stalinism in the "Polish October" threatened to have serious consequences for Piasecki and his movement. The "aristocratic" element promptly withdrew from *Pax* and formed a separate organization. At the same time, Cardinal Wyszynski's release and the restoration of normal relations between the Gomulka regime and the Episcopate terminated Piasecki's pretensions to undisputed leadership of the Polish Catholics. This development was soon reinforced by the formation of a rival independent Catholic organization known as *Znak* (Sign), which appears to have full support from Cardinal Wyszynski.[9]

Meanwhile, Piasecki came under heavy and prolonged public attack from both Communist and non-Communist quarters because of his fascist past and his collaboration with Stalinism. In the midst of this campaign, on January 22, 1957, his 16-year old son, Bogdan, a high school student, was suddenly kidnapped in broad daylight while walking along a Warsaw street. Despite Piasecki's ransom offer of 10,000 *zlotys* ($4,000), no trace of the boy could be found, and the motives and identity of the kidnappers still remain an unsolved mystery. The effect of this personal tragedy, however, was to bring about the cessation of the violent campaign of denunciation directed at Piasecki.

Four months later Piasecki himself ended the truce. In a speech delivered on May 7, 1957, at the plenary convention of *Pax* in Warsaw, he sharply criticized political developments in Poland since the October revolution. Arguing from the standpoint of "the socialist commitment of the people," he again cautioned against political experimentation, expressed dissatisfaction with the postrevolutionary tendency of the Polish Communists to lean more toward China and Yugoslavia than toward the Soviet Union, castigated manifestations of "cosmopolitanism", and affirmed that Poland must be governed by a strong power.[10] This implied exhortation in favor of a return to Stalinist policies was evidently aimed at stimulating opposition to Gomulka at the impending Ninth Plenum of the Polish Central Committee, but the maneuver failed to interfere with the Plenum's approval of Gomulka's program.

Piasecki's speech had been preceded by another provocative outburst a few days earlier. On May 3, the *Pax* organ *Slowo Powszechne* had published an article by Jerzy Hagmajer, another ex-Falangist now closely associated with Piasecki, charging that the latter's political foes—meaning virtually the entire anti-Stalinist camp—were morally responsible for the abduction of Piasecki's son. This accusation and Piasecki's anti-regime pronouncement of May 7 evoked prompt and indignant counterattacks in both the independent Catholic and Communist press. Among the most forceful was that of Jerzy Turowicz, editor of the revived Catholic weekly *Tygodnik Powszechny* in Cracow, who accused Piasecki of still harboring the same Stalinist views he had held before the October revolution, and of regarding the postrevolutionary reforms of the Gomulka regime as purely temporary.

A Precarious Truce

Many regime supporters hoped that Piasecki's new provocations would bring an end to the neutral, do-nothing attitude thus far taken by Gomulka toward *Pax* and its leader. The new party leadership, however, not only refrained from curbing Piasecki's activities, but has subsequently acted, in one conspicuous instance, in a manner seemingly friendly to the interests of *Pax.* This incident occurred in connection with a directive issued by Cardinal Wyszynski, Primate of the Polish Catholic Church, on July 6, 1957, strictly forbidding all priests and members of Catholic religious orders in Poland to cooperate in any way with publications controlled by *Pax.* (The directive implemented a Vatican decree announced a few days earlier.) The regime censorship promptly banned publication of Cardinal Wyszynski's directive in the organs of the independent Catholic press.[11]

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[9] *Znak* took its name from a "social Catholic" periodical published by its founders in Cracow. This group also controls the revived *Tygodnik Powszechny.*

[10] A summary of Piasecki's speech appeared in *Slowo Powszechne,* May 10, 1957.

[11] A detailed commentary on this incident was published in *Petrusblatt,* Catholic Church organ for the Diocese of Berlin, July 28, 1957.

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The censorship incident naturally poses the question of what reasons lie behind Gomulka's ambiguous attitude toward Piasecki and the *Pax* movement. The answer at least in part, may well be economic. *Pax* today owns the most prosperous of Poland's industrial enterprises, embracing a total of 35 plants with a gross yearly turnover the 300,000,000 *zlotys* ($12,000,000), or more than all other private industry in Poland combined. The most important of the *Pax* enterprises is the INCO manufacturing and trade organization, which operates several plants producing essential industrial goods that would otherwise have to be imported from Western countries. Another is Veritas, engaged principally in the manufacture of devotional articles. At present *Pax* is undertaking the establishment of 20 more industrial concerns to produce urgently needed building materials.

Though the success of the *Pax* enterprises is unquestionably due in part to good management and technical progressiveness, it has also been based to a large degree on the enjoyment of unusual tax benefits. All other private enterprises in Poland are subject to a 65 percent tax on net profits, but those of *Pax,* though just as private, are exempt from this levy, enjoying the same treatement as state enterprises. *Pax* concerns also receive equal treatment with state enterprises in respect of social insurance taxes, paying only 15.5 percent instead of the 30.5 percent required of private firms.[12]

It is from the profits of its state-favored economic empire that *Pax* derives the funds necessary to carry on its extensive activities for the propagation of Piasecki's politico-religious ideas. In the informational field, only its book publishing organization operates at a profit; the numerous newspapers and periodicals which form the backbone of its propaganda machine—including *Slowo Powszechne,* the weekly *Kierunki* and *Tygodnik Katholokow,* and the bi-monthly *Zycie i Mysl*—all lose money. In addition, *Pax* has supported, since its formation, its own Augustinian school in Warsaw and conducts an indoctrination center for members of the *Pax* movement. The total deficit of these undertakings amounts to something like 38,000,000 *zlotys* each year, which must be met from *Pax's* industrial profits.

As between the importance of *Pax's* thriving enterprises to the Polish economy and the counterbalancing fact that they provide the sinews for Piasecki's political machinations unfriendly to the present Polish Communist leadership, Gomulka seemingly attributes greater weight to the former consideration and prefers to refrain from governmental interference. At the same time, his attitude probably is influenced by a deeper and more complex consideration of a politico-ideological nature. There is little reason to believe that Gomulka, despite his truce with the Polish Catholic hierarchy, has strayed so far from the fundamental anti-religious tenets of communism that he can countenance any marked revival of the Church's influence in Poland. His continued tolerance of *Pax,* therefore, may well be inspired by the calculation that it will serve to keep the Catholic opponents of the regime divided among themselves, thus minimizing the danger of a solid religious front.

[12] For a full analysis of the favored treatment accorded to *Pax* enterprises, see the Polish economic weekly *Zycie Gospodarcze,* No. 27, July 7, 1957.

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Twilight of Soviet Totalitarianism?

Isaac Deutscher: *Russia in Transition,*
Howard McCann, Inc.,
New York, 1957.

Reviewed by Leon Gouré

THE SHATTERING of the rigid Stalinist mold once familiar in the Soviet Union has forced Western Sovietologists to reappraise their previous analyses of the nature of the Soviet system and to speculate about its present and future trends. The scholars who debated these problems last summer at St. Anthony's College, Oxford, came to no firm conclusions and left almost as many questions unanswered as were raised in the course of the discussions. Two trends emerged during the conference: one "optimistic," the other "pessimistic." The "optimists," such as Professor Merle Fainsod of Harvard University, were cautiously hopeful that the concessions made by the post-Stalinist regime would in time, with the help of the rising new generation and its successors, bring about an eventual softening and stabilization of the Soviet regime. The "pessimists," such as Mr. Bertram Wolfe, saw little hope for a fundamental transformation of the system.

Mr. Isaac Deutscher is also an "optimist," but one who is far removed from those who met at Oxford. Professor Fainsod, at that meeting, had summed up his view of the Soviet future in these carefully qualified terms:

> I think I see at last some possibility that an oligarchically governed totalitarian state may be transformed over the years into a more traditional type of authoritarian regime which provides at least minimal safeguards for the rights of individuals and groups and makes some adjustments to the plural energies which run in Soviet society.

Mr. Deutscher, on the other hand, declares unequivocally that the USSR is now passing through the "twilight of totalitarianism" on its way to the final goal of the Russian Revolution—the creation of a socialist democratic state. Mr. Fainsod is merely hopeful; Mr. Deutscher is certain and quite prepared to assert his position as dogmatically as he thinks necessary.

Russia in Transition is a collection of fourteen selected articles published by Mr. Deutscher in various magazines since 1948, all but three of which, dealing with the 1955-56 period, had also appeared in book form in England under the title *Heretics and Renegades* (Hamish Hamilton, London, 1955). The author's basic thesis had been on record for some time and has already attracted much comment and criticism. His analysis is based on Marxist determinism, a fact which he himself stated in one chapter of the earlier English edition, but which has been omitted from the American version.

IN MR. DEUTSCHER'S view, Stalinism was the product of the objective conditions existing in Russia after 1917 and therefore not only historically necessary, but even desirable. Stalin's rise to absolute power was the direct result of single-party rule, which inevitably evolved into rule by a single faction, supplanted in turn through the domination and destruction of this faction by a single leader. Deutscher further sees Stalinism as the result of the assimilation of "Russian traditions" by a Russian Bolshevism isolated in a capitalist world. To save the revolution, only a ruthless leader could force the primitive, preindustrial Russian society to submit to the massive "primitive socialist accumulation" which alone could lift Russia by its bootstraps to the level necessary for the development of socialist democracy. Thus, Stalin "used barbarous means to drive barbarism out of Russia" and "towards the end of his life, the great pirate of socialism had done his job." Furthermore, Stalinism was possible because of the "deep political lethargy and torpor of the masses" who had expended all their energies in the great battles of the revolution; the élite, faced by constant emergencies and crises, clung to their chief even at the cost of their own lives.

Thus, if Stalinism was evil, it was, in the author's view, an evil born of necessity and serving a commendable ultimate goal. Stalin's only crime was that he persisted

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in the old ways even after they no longer fitted the new social, economic and political stage of Soviet development. In this new phase, Stalinist barbarism was no longer an asset but a serious liability. Consequently, Stalin's death inevitably opened the gates to reform.

DEUTSCHER sees the new Soviet industrial society as subject once again to the Marxist law of class struggle: in this case, between the bureaucracy and the working class. The latter has only in this decade begun to emerge as a modern social and political force of a magnitude hitherto unknown in Russian history. So far, reform has come from above. Destalinization was "an act of the bureaucracy's self-determination," but the benefits accrued to the people as a whole. "The need to rationalize the working of the state machine and to free social relations from anachronistic encumbrances," says the author, "has induced the bureaucracy to favor reform." Mr. Deutscher seems to expect this movement to go on, leading gradually to an extensive transformation of the system. But the ruling group is also anxious to preserve its privileges and therefore is determined to hold "the initiative firmly and not allow its hands to be forced by popular pressure."

On the other hand, the author contends, the revival of the "long-suppressed egalitarian aspirations of the new working class is bringing increasing pressure to bear on the bureaucratic masters. This is only beginning, and Mr. Deutscher expects that the new working class "cannot possibly remain content with the administrative-ideological limitations of the post-Stalinist reforms" and is eventually bound "to give a distinct proletarian meaning and content to the current ideas and slogans of democratization." Told for forty years that they were the rulers of the Soviet Union, the workers "could not help feeling edified, elevated and even flattered by it" but now are coming to realize that they and not the bureaucracy should be the ruling power not just in theory, but in fact. This neither the bureaucracy, nor the intelligentsia, which is also "inclined to preserve the social *status quo*," will presumably be prepared to concede. Hence, says the author, the Soviet people are "getting ready for another world-shaking historical experience."

Mr. Deutscher expects that the outcome of this momentous struggle will be the creation of a socialist democratic society. It will be socialist presumably because the evolution which produced the present economic structure is largely irreversible and because of the egalitarianism of the workers. It will be democratic because, in Deutscher's belief, a highly developed and expanding industrial system, such as that of the Soviet Union, fosters democratic trends. On the basis of these questionable assumptions, the author concludes that "it is the twilight of totalitarianism that the USSR is living through." The outcome thus determined, the world has only to sit back and wait.

There is however, another outcome which, despite its incongruity with his own logical construction, Deutscher recognizes as possible, namely Bonapartism. This may come about, he foresees, as a consequence of foreign threats and of internal unrest resulting from the struggle between the workers and the bureaucracy, in which case the Soviet military leaders may tire of being mere gendarmes for the regime and may themselves seize the reins of power. The author rejects historical inevitability in this instance, denying that the struggle of the new working class must *necessarily* lead to Bonapartism. He evidently bases this on the vague hope that the "formation of a new political consciousness will not lag dangerously behind the revival of mass movements."

Since Mr. Deutscher sets no time limit either on the duration of the "twilight of totalitarianism" or on the completion of the predicted social-political struggle, the validity of his thesis obviously must await the long-term test of history. But unless he expects the reader to accept his analysis simply on faith, he must find some support for it in current developments in the Soviet Union. Unfortunately, he seems to rely more on simple assertion than on facts. Thus the key proposition that the working class is now becoming a "modern social force" increasingly ready to challenge the power of the ruling bureaucracy is left without any real substantiation; in fact, it rests above all on the author's mere belief that sufficient time has elapsed for the consolidation of the urban industrial proletariat to make it such a force.

TRUE, THE AUTHOR does cite evidence of the growing egalitarian demands of the workers. It is certain that the Russian workers want an improvement in their living conditions and that they resent the privileges of the ruling group, but this does not mean that their demands can be equated with socialist egalitarianism. Nor is there any proof that the reforms instituted by the leadership in the field of wages, pensions and working conditions were the result of egalitarian demands. It does not follow, for example, that the "abolition of school fees is the rulers' tribute to the new egalitarianism." All such reforms were needed in any case, if the operating efficiency of the expanding Soviet industrial system under conditions of labor shortage was to be improved. The enlargement of labor incentives, also, is not necessarily indicative of the emergence of a class-conscious working-class: rather, the managerial groups favored such reforms since they were, as Deutscher himself admits, the "prerequisite for a steady rise in labor productivity and higher industrial efficiency."

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The author's basic argument concerning the irreversibility of present politico-economic trends in the Soviet Union is founded on the assertions that Stalinism no longer fits the present stage of Soviet social-economic development, and that the new regime has committed itself publicly to anti-Stalinism to such an extent as to be incapable of reversing its course. Mr. Deutscher believes that destalinization, as "an act of the bureaucracy's self-determination," has "exploded the idea of the monolithic party and of the monolithic state": Khrushchev "has exposed not only Stalin but Stalinism, not only the man but his method of government, and this renders the continuation or revival of the method nearly impossible." In support of this belief, he points out that "major policy decisions are not taken by Khrushchev alone" or by the Presidium, but by the full Central Committee in which "free debate has apparently . . . been restored and differences of opinion have been resolved by majority vote." Similarly, the author describes the power of the political police as "broken" but indicates, in somewhat contradictory fashion, that he cannot yet tell whether the "nightmare of mass deportations" has ceased once and for all or only temporarily. The author conceded that Stalinism is being revised by Stalinist methods, by carefully controlled reforms from above which have granted freedom only to the highest ranks of the "bureaucracy," but he confidently predicts that "eventually the higher ranks will either share their newly-won freedom with the lower ranks, or else they themselves must lose it."

A distinction must, of course, be made between the specific character and methods of Stalinism on the one hand, and the totalitarian system on the other. No one can deny that Soviet life today reflects great and significant departures from the specifically Stalinist form of totalitarianism. But this does not automatically imply the end of totalitarianism itself for a long time to come. Transitions of power in a totalitarian society are nearly always a painful and difficult process. Pure Stalinism was incompatible with "collective leadership" and, as pointed out by Mr. Deutscher, only hindered rationalization of the operation of the state and of the Soviet economic machine. Furthermore, since the political police was an instrument of Stalin's personal rule, its down-grading was unavoidable under conditions of "collective leadership." The consolidation of the new regime, even while its members struggled for individual power, had therefore to be achieved by means other than police terror. Since the leadership had to rely for its power on the party and the bureaucracy rather than on the police, and since it faced the problem of maintaining a high rate of industrial growth under conditions of labor shortage, over-centralization and agricultural backwardness, a certain mellowing of the totalitarian dictatorship was probably unavoidable. But the political concessions and economic reforms granted so far have not significantly lessened the one-sided emphasis on the development of heavy industry, while at the same time they have strengthened the role of the party—both essential elements for the preservation of the totalitarian system.

SOVIET SOCIETY cannot simply be divided into two classes of workers and bureaucrats: the interest groups and their relationships to one another are far more complex than that. Above all, one cannot equate the Communist Party with the state and industrial bureaucracy. The party, or political élite, does not represent a social class in the Marxist sense and, despite a certain overlapping with the state bureaucracy, its interests do not, in many instances, coincide with those of the bureaucracy. This is why Khrushchev, while attempting to build up the position of the party, is able to carry out a concentrated attack on the state bureaucracy, shipping thousands of its reluctant members off to the provinces, subjecting them to tightened party supervision, criticism and controls. The defeat of Malenkov's attempt to revise the heavy industry program and Khrushchev's victory over the "anti-party group" in June of this year are also indicative of the party's successful domination of the bureaucracy.

There is, moreover, little indication so far that the working class has had any appreciable effect on the power struggle at the top. Even though, along with elements of the bureaucracy, the working class might have preferred Malenkov's consumer goods program to Khrushchev's renewed favoritism for heavy industry, and although it had every reason to fear the emergence of the party as the dominant instrument of power, it played no noticeable role in the recent developments. In fact, Mr. Deutscher himself acknowledges that at present it is the intelligentsia and, above all, the youth who are leading the assault on Soviet totalitarianism, rather than any specific social class. The widely reported unrest among the youth, in particular, is not surprising since they did not experience the full weight of Stalinist terror and have the most pronounced ideological fervor and romantic hopes. It is not unreasonable to assume that the attitude of the rising generations, rather than of the "new working class" *per se,* will in time exert considerable influence on the development of the Soviet system, but whether it will be in the "right" direction cannot be predicted.

As for Mr. Deutscher's unproved contention that the course of the new Soviet leadership is irreversibly set toward democratization, this is by no means apparent from developments to date. Indeed, reversals in the trend seen by the author have already occurred. Thus,

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his expectations that "collective leadership" would endure and that increasing freedom would be granted to the lower ranks have not been borne out by Khrushchev's successful climb to overweening personal power. Mr. Deutscher may find some consolation in his impression that Khrushchev is "probably still the Russian worker, writ large—the Russian worker who inwardly remained true to himself even in the Stalinist straitjacket," but he cannot ignore the plain fact that this particular "Russian worker" has already begun to curtail the freedom seemingly granted to the Soviet people through destalinization. One by one, the intellectual rebels among the writers, historians, scientists and artists have been made to recant and to re-subscribe to the supremacy of the party line. At a recent gathering of Soviet writers, Khrushchev is reported to have said that the revolt in Hungary would never have occurred if the regime had taken out and shot some of the rebellious writers in the summer of 1956, and that, should a similar situation arise in the Soviet Union, his own hands would not "tremble."[1] The political police (KGB), which is controlled by two Khrushchev adherents, Serov and Lunev, has already begun to arrest the more unruly students and workers. But even admitting that a full-fledged return to Stalinism is unlikely, there is certainly no evidence to support casting Khrushchev in the role of a "liberal" and asserting, as Mr. Deutscher does in one of his recent articles, that he "fights against an opposition that stands in the main for the preservation of totalitarian practices."[2]

Indeed, according to Mr. Deutscher's own analysis, the continuance of single party rule, coupled now with the victory of one of its factions, should logically lead to the emergence of another autocrat. The changes instituted so far have been designed primarily to revive and perpetuate the dynamism and supremacy of the Communist Party. For the present at least, to borrow the author's words, the "edifice of post-Stalinist society has to be built with the bricks left over from Stalinist Russia," which is precisely why the system has shown itself to be stronger than the forces which feared and opposed the emergence of an *apparatchik* "leader." In a totalitarian society each new leader has to build up his own charisma, and destalinization may serve this purpose in Khrushchev's case. Mr. Deutscher himself concedes that "in a sense the man who smashes his idol stands above the one who prostrates himself before it." Whether or not, in the long run, Khrushchev can control the forces which he has helped to unleash and whether he will be able to find a viable solution to the contradictory demands of party supremacy and economic efficiency cannot be predicted at the present time. Much as one would like to share Mr. Deutscher's optimistic view of what the future holds, it is essential to remain aware that his hopes are not convincingly rooted in reality and that Soviet totalitarianism may still be far from its "twilight" stage.

[1] "The Silent Writers of Hungary," *The Times Literary Supplement* (London) August 16, 1957, p. xxii.

[2] Isaac Deutscher, "New Line-up in the Kremlin," *The Reporter,* August 8, 1957 p. 34.

Latin American Communism

Robert J. Alexander:
Communism in Latin America
Rutgers University Press, N. J., 1957.

Reviewed by Victor Alba

UNTIL WORLD WAR II, Latin America was a comparatively little known and neglected part of the world, politically and otherwise. Even Moscow, embroiled in its old world conflicts, paid little attention to the area. The postwar era, however, has brought about a visible intensification of Communist interest in the Latin American countries. Discontent and social antagonisms make all too many of these a vulnerable target for Communist penetration.

The grave implications of this fact emerge in a newly published analytical history of communism in Latin America by Robert J. Alexander, a professor of economics at Rutgers University, New Jersey, who has devoted years of study to the problems and affairs of the area. His volume is a valuable contribution not

Mr. Alba, a Spanish journalist now residing in the United States, is author of *Le mouvement ouvrière en Amerique latine* (Paris: Les Editions Ouvrières), 1953.

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only as a study of international communism as it works in one area of the globe, but as a comprehensive survey of Latin America's complex modern history, much of which has been only sketchily recorded heretofore.

The author's incisive analysis helps to dispel some widely-held misconceptions about Latin America. One is that popular discontent is due primarily in Latin America as it is elsewhere to economic backwardness, poverty, and an uneconomic system of land holdings. While economic factors are important, they are only part of the story. In Professor Alexander's view, discontent stems also from such factors as 1) a basic need for changes in the social structure which could make possible a normal and stable democratic life, and 2) a traditional suspicion of all economic cooperation programs for their possible colonialist motivation.

A SECOND and closely-related misconception is that poverty is the prime factor which makes Latin America susceptible to Communist influence. Professor Alexander points out that communism's appeal has been much less effective among the poorer groups of the population than among elements of the urban middle class, the intellectuals and the students. His analysis implies that among these groups it is not economic conditions but the repeated frustration of any attempts at social or political reform which has driven some to support of the Communists. The material progress brought about by the beginnings of industrialization has not substantially affected the economic status of these groups, whereas it has led to some improvement in the lot of the farm workers and city laborers in most of the Latin American countries. As a result, communism has had relatively little success among the latter elements.

Because of their concern over societal ills as well as their natural preoccupation with ideas, intellectuals and students are apt to seek and to favor overall remedies for prevailing national problems. Their major concern is to rid their countries of the remnants of feudalism and to establish greater freedoms and social justice. When progress along these lines has been frustrated, the Communists have found fertile soil for agitation; conversely, with the achievement of any step toward reform, the Communists have been deprived of opportunity to extend their influence.

Mr. Alexander cites the examples of Guatemala and Chile to demonstrate his belief that local social revolution is the best means of preventing the development of communism. Because neither country has had such a revolution, the Communists were able to attain positions of considerable influence in them. In the Latin American context, it is to be noted, the term "social revolution" implies a gradual improvement of conditions rather than any sudden overthrow of the existing order, and a system of land ownership appropriate to present-day concepts of equitable distribution. Briefly, it means the eradication of feudal practices inherited from an earlier colonial period and strengthened in the nineteenth century, when independence from Spain gave landowners powers formerly reserved to the state. Among these feudal relics are the system of agrarian property in the form of extensive land-holdings by a few individuals, and the system of serfdom which gives landowners complete control over their peon labor. To cite an extreme case of these systems in operation, landowners in the Andes have been known to exercise their right to absolute control over their peons by sending them off to work in the mines and retaining the income of such labor for their own estates.

Throughout South America, the Communists have not hesitated in past years to help perpetuate these feudal elements by cooperating with established dictatorships or with governments having totalitarian of demagogic tendencies, whenever such cooperation suited their own ends. A case in point was their support of the dictator Leguila in Peru some twenty years ago. Other instances are afforded by Communist action in Chile, Guatemala, Venezuela, and the Dominican Republic. In recent years, however, the Communists have been taking certain precautionary measures to cover themselves in the event of failure by the powers with whom they have been cooperating. Thus, with the establishment of any government, they divide themselves into two seemingly opposed camps. One group cooperates with the existing government, the other with the opposition. This technique was followed during the Peron regime in Argentina and, later during dictatorial regimes in Peru and Venezuela.

LATIN AMERICAN communism has followed all world communism's changes in line, including social fascism, the united front, the popular front. Whenever Moscow has ordered an about-face or issued new rules of conduct, the party organizations have docilely complied. Because the parties are small, they are tightly-knit and much more bureaucratic in character than Communist movements which have established a wide base among the masses. Even such events as the Hungarian revolution of 1956, which caused deep rifts in Communist ranks elsewhere in the world, failed to have much impact on the Latin American parties. To the "professionals" who man the party bureaucracies, obedience to Moscow is implicit in their jobs.

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The absence of mass movements should not be construed to mean, however, that communism has failed to exert an influence in Latin America. Above all else public opinion in Latin America is urban; it is shaped by the aforementioned groups, the urban middle class, the intellectuals, and the students—precisely those groups among which communism has won sympathizers. More than in other countries, then, fellow travelers in Latin America are in a position to exert influence disproportionate to their numbers.

TWO FACTS of special interest emerge from Professor Alexander's study. One is the lack of outstanding personalities in the Latin American Communist movement, either political leaders or Communist theorists of any stature, especially since the deaths of Argentinian educator Anibal Ponce and Peruvian journalist J. C. Mariategui. And neither Ponce, who wrote on social problems from a Marxist point of view, nor Mariategui, who formed the Socialist Party in Peru and became probably the outstanding exponent of Marxism in Latin America, were members of the Communist Party.

The other point evident from this study is that communism—despite its general failure to stir the working masses—has gained some strength when, and *only* when, it has managed to get control of labor unions. Thus, at the present time Communists are particularly well-entrenched in Chile, where they managed to seize control of many labor unions. Similarly, their greatest strength in Mexico coincided with their control of Mexican trade unions some ten years ago.

Unlike these instances of success, many of the events and struggles recounted by Professor Alexander reveal the surprising extent to which Moscow has underrated and misunderstood Latin American problems in years past. Errors in tactics and perspective have in many instances resulted in the misdirection of the efforts of its disciplined teams of Latin American leaders and cadres. For example, the Communist Party in Mexico was ordered to switch its opposition from Calles to Cardenas and then back again, as each president in turn was considered too progressive to sustain the Communist cause. In Chile, Peru and Venezuela, the Communists made similar turnabouts in their political alliances, attempting to move with the popular cause but, in the end, supporting the side which no longer was popular. In recent years, indications are that Moscow is beginning to evaluate Latin America more closely, relying on area experts to determine the fine distinctions between Latin American problems and those in other underdeveloped areas. This is a decided innovation since the days of Lenin and Stalin.

Professor Alexander devotes considerable attention to relations between the Communists and military groups, important because of the crucial and too often pernicious role of military pressures in Latin American politics. As he points out, some of these groups, while not necessarily dangerous as a direct threat to national security, act as a wedge through which the Communists can work. In their persistent efforts to gain power, the military groups are apt to come into conflict with political groups in situations tailor-made for Communist activity. With pressure, as was exerted in Guatemala, the situations can become grave enough to require a military solution.

Professor Alexander concludes his book with four basic reminders:

1) Latin American Communists are not "agrarian reformers," "radicals," or "indigenous revolutionists" but disciplined party stalwarts;

2) The Communist danger in Latin America is primarily political rather than military in nature;

3) Latin American Communists are working under essentially the same conditions which prevail in all underdeveloped countries as they face changes precipitated by the advent of industrialization;

4) The primary forces opposed to communism in Latin America are the democratic radical groups who are working to bring about social revolution by democratic and peaceful means.

In addition to the author's explicit conclusions, the reviewer would stress a fifth point, which is implicit in Professor Alexander's book: South America offers decisive evidence that communism is bred not by poverty but by the frustration of those who seek to combat poverty without sacrificing either justice or freedom.

It is Professor Alexander's final judgment that dictatorships are transitory and constitute inadequate dikes for holding back the Communist surge. Only those who can present an imaginative and at the same time constructive program of social reform to the peoples of Latin America are capable of triumphing over the Communists. *Communism in Latin America* helps toward an understanding of this essential truth.

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The Military in Soviet Politics

By Raymond L. Garthoff

THE LATEST KREMLIN COUP has unleashed a wave of speculations about the role of "the Army", "the military", "the Marshals", and of Marshal Zhukov personally, in Soviet politics. At this time of writing (November 1), the facts are not yet sufficiently clear to permit an analysis of the factors involved in Zhukov's sudden removal as Defense Minister. It may be useful, however, to examine some aspects of the underlying problem: What is the institutional position of the "Army" in Soviet society; how has that position changed in the past four years; and what have been the evidences of its changing political role? Further, does the military leadership represent a cohesive political force, and if so what conditions its political viewpoint? Finally, what appears to be the course ahead in view of the breakdown of the Khrushchev-Zhukov political alliance?

The Soviet military establishment or Army (this term will be used below to cover the whole defense organization of ground, sea and air forces) differs little in its general institutional features from those of other countries. It is technically an arm of the executive branch of the government, specifically of the Defense Ministry. It commands the weapons of national defense, which at the same time constitute the regime's ultimate "persuader" for enforcing its will internally. It is composed of a permanent caste of officers and an annually changing slice of the population over which the leadership caste exercises powerful rights of discipline and control.

These features admittedly are not peculiar to the Soviet Army, but in a totalitarian society their political impact is quite different from what it is under a democratic system. In a democracy political power is exercised by a government responsible to the electorate or its freely-chosen legislative representatives, and the armed forces, fully controlled by the government, are not, as such, a contender for political supremacy. In a totalitarian society, on the other hand, the locus of political power is determined, not by fixed and orderly procedures, but by a continuing struggle for supremacy in which the upper hand, and hence controlling power, may shift from one man or group of men or from one competing institution to another. The relative strength, cohesiveness and élan of an institution, be it the party, secret police, government bureaucracy or army, thus are vital factors in the power struggle and tend to have a decisive impact whenever the struggle becomes particularly acute. This is why, with the rivalry for Stalin's succession still in full swing, the Soviet Army's characteristic features have thrust it inevitably into a position of major importance in the struggle for political supremacy.

ONE SUCH FEATURE is adherence to its own traditions, many of which antedate the Soviet regime. Past Russian military achievements, whether under the Tsars or since the Revolution, are held in high regard by the officer corps and inspire in it a particular sense of national patriotism. This patriotic feeling within the Army is reflected in the view of the Army held by the people at large. It is genuinely popular among them in a way that the officially supreme institution, the party, is not.

Even Stalin, who sought to keep the Army subservient to his autocratic control, found it expedient on occasion to acknowledge and cater to the Army's pride in its own military and patriotic traditions. His wartime invocation of the deeds of Tsarist military heroes such as Suvorov—certainly incongruous from the standpoint of party ideology—is a case in point. Stalin made other concessions to military *esprit de corps.* The epaulettes proudly worn by Soviet officers were originally proposed by Marshal Tukhachevsky, and though Stalin liquidated Tukhachevsky, he later adopted this and other practices favored by the professional officers.

A relatively marked degree of cultural and social inbreeding has also contributed toward building up in the officer corps a sense of cohesiveness and group solidarity. Members of the military caste even tend to marry within the group: for example, Marshal Zhukov's two daughters are married to Marshal Vasilevsky's son and the nephew of Marshal Voroshilov.

The marked elevation of the Army's relative standing in national affairs has been brought about primarily by the great changes that have occurred in the political balance of Soviet institutions in the last four years. The death of Stalin was, of course, the first and most far-reaching of these changes, for with the disappearance of the all-

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powerful autocrat, all other major Soviet institutions automatically gained greater significance, at the same time becoming participants in the ensuing struggle for political dominance.

The Army was even more directly affected by the second major change in the institutional balance of power, the purge of Beria. In the wake of Stalin's death Beria attempted to use the secret police as a direct instrument to further his own political ambitions. His elimination as a result of a successful political combination against him was followed by a drastic reduction of the powers of the secret police, and hence of its importance as a political institution. The Army naturally was a principal beneficiary of the downgrading of its only rival with tools of violence at its command.

THE THIRD development was the emergence, during Malenkov's two-year premiership, of a contest for supremacy between the government and party bureaucracies. Malenkov's attempt to bolster the power of the government bureaucracy (including the entire economic administration) at the expense of the party apparatus may have been an expedient to counteract his loss of the key post of party secretary in mid-March 1953, although there are also grounds for believing (as this writer does) that he would have acted in the same way even if he had retained simultaneous control of the party apparatus. In any event, it appears essentially true, as his accusers charged at the time of his ouster from the premiership in February 1955, that Malenkov sought to place the government over the party; hence, his defeat necessarily meant a weakening of the government apparatus and a reaffirmation of party supremacy. In late 1956 and early 1957, there were signs of a resurgence of the Malenkov forces and of a new attempt by them to secure a strengthening of the government economic bureaucracy. The adoption of Khrushchev's decentralization plan last May, however, signalled the crushing of this attempt, and the victory of the party forces was further underlined and consolidated by Khrushchev's *coup* in June 1957.

The party, of course, was not only a contender in these political struggles and readjustments, but also the arena of conflict. The figures who "represented" the contending institutions—Beria, Malenkov, Khrushchev and Zhukov—were all members of the party leadership, and the formation and shifts of factional alignments within the party organs, particularly in the Presidium and Central Committee, were the key maneuvers in the battle. The inevitable result of this combined institutional and intra-party struggle was that the opposing forces sought to swing the balance, each in its own favor, by enlisting the aid of the most important outside element, the Army, which thus found itself propelled—whether voluntarily or involuntarily—into a position of steadily mounting political influence.

The Army's increasing importance as a political factor was evident from the part it played in each of the three earlier major political crises since Stalin's death—the overthrow of Beria, the deposition of Malenkov, and Khrushchev's smashing of the Malenkov-Molotov forces in the dramatic Central Committee showdown last June. While the exact details of the role played by the military in Beria's elimination are not known, all the available evidence indicates that it was decisive. Some reports credit Marshals Zhukov and Konev with personally carrying out Beria's arrest. Be this as it may, it is a known fact that Army units were moved into Moscow from outside military districts on the night of the arrest. Furthermore, immediately after Beria's fall, the military received a number of conspicuous rewards, including the first high-level promotions granted since the end of the war.

The Army's hand was equally apparent in the deposition of Malenkov. In this instance, the military leaders took direct political action by casting their votes against Malenkov at the January 1955 Plenum of the Central Committee —the first time that this organ had played a politically significant role since 1934. But the crucial importance of the Army's role was even more convincingly, if indirectly, demonstrated by the prompt action of the succeeding Khrushchev-Bulganin leadership to satisfy military demands for the maintenance of defense appropriations, military industry and the stockpiling of reserves—all which had been slighted by Malenkov. The Army was also given a new series of high-level promotions, as well as direct control of the Defense Ministry, through the appointment of Marshal Zhukov as Defense Minister.

In the June 1957 crisis, which culminated in the destruction of the anti-Khrushchev alliance, the Army again was instrumental. Marshal Zhukov is known to have given strong support to Khrushchev's insistence upon carrying the fight from the Presidium, where the opposition forces were in the majority, to the Central Committee, controlled by Khrushchev. Not only was Zhukov's voice a powerful influence in the plenary Central Committee proceedings, but in subsequent public statements "on behalf of the Armed Forces" he pledged continued support to the party leadership, meaning the present leadership under Khrushchev's strengthened personal grip.

FROM ALL THIS it was clear that the Army, as an institution, had become an increasingly important factor in Soviet political life. But the Army operates in politics only through its leaders. It is therefore necessary to examine these leaders—"the Marshals"—both as a group and, to the extent that may be relevant, as individual political figures.

Although the Army command is a typically hierarchic structure embracing thousands of officers, the real political leadership resides in a small coterie numbering, in all, only about a dozen men: the Defense Minister, his principal deputies, and a few other senior marshals who wield important authority by reason either of their official positions or of high personal influence. These leaders show a general cohesiveness of viewpoint, based largely on their common professional experience, associations and interests. They have made their careers in the Army and long been identified with it. They have also developed long and close associations with one another in the military service. Their common self-interest as professional soldiers is a particularly strong factor tending to produce a unified political viewpoint, especially in regard to issues affecting military security.

This cohesiveness, of course, is also subject to some

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limitations. The Army is not immune from factionalism, and there are personal rivalries among the Marshals—some already known and doubtless others which are hidden from view. Some of the leaders appear to be more politically and party-minded, while others are inclined more toward an apolitical and purely professional line of conduct. There have been, in recent years, a few instances in which conflicting currents within the top echelons of the Army became quite evident. Most notably, in 1953, when the military leaders generally backed Malenkov in the move to eliminate Beria, Colonel General Artemev, then commandant of the Moscow Military District, and at least two other generals were accused of being in league with the secret police head and suffered the same fate that he did. In the subsequent 1954 conflict between the Malenkov and Khrushchev factions, the Army leadership was evidently united in supporting the latter; but, after Malenkov's deposition, there again were signs of an incipient divergence of views. While the majority of the leaders, including Marshal Zhukov, sought to stand aloof from intra-party factional alignments, a minority group, most prominently Marshals Konev and Moskalenko, manifested a tendency to go further in support of Khrushchev. (For example, Konev backed Khrushchev's efforts to have the history of the war rewritten to give greater prominence to the latter's wartime military record.) [1] The danger of a new factional split receded in 1956, however, as Marshal Zhukov was again drawn into an active role in support of Khrushchev and emerged as the unquestioned leader and spokesman of a temporarily united Army leadership.

MEMBERSHIP on the Central Committee of the party is an important index of the political standing of senior military officers, and it has also become practically more significant because of the recent tendency toward greater Central Committee participation in political decision-making. The membership, as elected in 1956, included six full members and twelve candidate members from the military (one additional full member may have been added, though this is not certain). The full members were Marshals Zhukov, Konev, Sokolovsky, Vasilevsky, Malinovsky, Moskalenko (and possibly Rokossovsky). All except Moskalenko [2] were "natural" selections by virtue of their military positions—Zhukov as Defense Minister and the others as his first deputies. The twelve candidate members were all senior officers from the next lower level of the High Command, but they included several who previously were associated with Khrushchev and presumably were "acceptable" to him.

A striking feature of the 1956-57 military representation on the Central Committee was that, for the first time, it included no senior officers from the Army Political Administration, which had undergone a steady decline in importance since 1951, but especially since Stalin's death.[3] The effect of this was to make the Army's voice in the Central Committee more representative of the strictly military point of view, and while the military representation is not large, the number of votes it wielded was hardly indicative of its actual influence in a system where numerical voting strength is conspicuously misleading.

THE RISE OF THE ARMY as an institutional force in Soviet politics had, until Zhukov's dismissal, been paralleled by his own personal rise. Zhukov was raised to the rank of first deputy minister (one of three) immediately after Stalin's death and in 1953, at the same Central Committee session which decided Beria's expulsion and arrest, was elected to fill the latter's seat on the committee. After Malenkov's deposition he became, as Defense Minister, the Army's administrative chief and top political representative. After the Twentieth CPSU Congress he became a candidate member of the party's highest organ, the Central Committee Presidium, and finally won full membership in the shake-up of last June. Zhukov was the first genuine professional military officer ever accorded a regular seat on the Presidium.

The question arises to what extent Zhukov's rise reflected the growing political importance of the Army as an institution, and to what extent it was due to his own reputation and influence as a popular war hero and the deliberate pursuit of personal political ambitions. Undoubtedly the latter played an important part, but in the author's view Zhukov achieved his temporary preeminence primarily as representative and spokesman of "the military" as a group. Indicative of this is the fact that the other military leaders and the Army generally were accorded more favorable status with each successive step upward in Zhukov's career. Zhukov, as the Army's leader had both benefited from its heightened importance and at the same acted primarily with a view to satisfying its needs and desires.

There is no incontrovertible indication that the Army's rise was spurred by a deliberate desire on the part of Zhukov and his colleagues to seek political power for its own sake. They have been concerned, above all, with assuring the military security of the Soviet Union, for which they are personally responsible. But this seemingly nonpolitical concern for security requirements and the military posture of the Soviet state is precisely what has led the Army leadership to endorse certain policies and oppose others, and thus to become involved in factional political struggles. As noted earlier, it was Malenkov's attempt to benefit Soviet consumers at the expense of heavy and defense industry and of strategic stockpiling that impelled the military to enter the political arena in support of Khrushchev. Similarly, the Army's influence probably was a decisive factor both in the Soviet decision to intervene in Hungary in October-November 1956, and in Moscow's continuing resistance to any reasonable disarmament proposals

[1] This campaign started early in 1955 with increasing public mention of Khrushchev (a military commissar with the rank of lieutenant general during the war) and a few other selected party figures as having served "at the front". Konev even changed the usual alphabetical listing of these names to place Khrushchev ahead of the others. There was also an effort to credit Khrushchev with an important role in the Battle of Stalingrad.

[2] Moskalenko, a virtually unknown colonel general in 1952, became commandant of the Moscow Military District following Beria's arrest and the removal of Artemev, and still holds this post. He was promoted in rank in 1953 and again in 1955, and became a Central Committee member in 1956. He is known as a Khrushchev supporter.

[3] In 1951 the authority of political officers was weakened by a secret decree reemphasizing unified command. In late 1955, political officers were abolished at company level, and there have been indications that the practice of having "deputy commanders" from the Political Administration at higher levels may also be discontinued. The previous Central Committee, elected in 1952, included three military members from the Political Administration.

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from the West. It may well prove to be a policy issue, as yet unrevealed, which led Khrushchev to purge Zhukov.

Thus, even though the Marshals do not appear to be motivated by political ambition *per se*, they are clearly conscious of their ability to wield political power when their interests demand it. Had this power not been brought to bear on his behalf, Khrushchev might very well have failed to achieve his most decisive victory in the June showdown against the Malenkov-Molotov majority in the party Presidium.

WHAT EFFECT IS Zhukov's removal likely to have on the Army's future role in Soviet politics? For one thing, the military have learned that the exercise of political power entails risks and pitfalls as well as advantages. Zhukov's ouster as Defense Minister, followed by his expulsion from the party Central Committee and the top-level CC Presidium, seems to foreshadow a new status for the Army in which it will no longer be given the opportunity to act as a cohesive, powerful political force rivaling the party. To be sure, it will not cease to exert considerable influence in matters directly bearing on national security and will continue to be at least a potential force of great importance in Soviet politics. For the time being, however, it cannot hope to play the same decisive role in the power struggle and in the determination of policy that it attained under Zhukov's leadership.

As of this moment, we do not know the precise reasons for Zhukov's ouster, even though their general character is clear enough. We may never know all the causes. So far, the principal charge levelled at Zhukov—not without some basis—is that he attempted to place the Army outside the party's control by curbing the work of the Political Administration and of the party organizations in the Army. It is unlikely, however, that this alone would have impelled Khrushchev to darken the fortieth anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution by yet another revelation of disunity at the highest level of the Soviet leadership. Zhukov's efforts to restrict party interference in Army affairs furnished Khrushchev with his most convenient and plausible justification for acting against the Army leader. But it remains to be seen whether later disclosures will not lay bare other important conflicts.

One can safely surmise that an underlying motive behind Khrushchev's action was his wariness concerning Marshal Zhukov's rising personal power and popularity. When Zhukov brought his "heavy artillery" to the support of Khrushchev in the June 1957 political crisis, it was not hard for the party chief to imagine a future crisis in which the same guns might be turned against him. Dependence on Zhukov seriously hampered his freedom of action,[4] hence it was logical for Khrushchev to seek an end to this dependence. What better way to achieve this than to separate Zhukov from his base of power in the Army?

The selection of Marshal Malinovsky to replace Zhukov suggests some interesting hypotheses concerning Khrushchev's tactics. Had Khrushchev selected a Marshal already identified as his close political supporter, such as Marshal Konev, or especially Marshal Moskalenko—the rest of the military leadership might have taken it as a sign of an impending general purge of their ranks, and might have been tempted to rally more solidly to the support of Zhukov. By choosing the relatively uncommitted Malinovsky (third-ranking military chief under Zhukov) Khrushchev probably hoped to minimize this danger. If this was indeed the case, Khrushchev's very action implied his recognition of the increased importance of the military and his assurance that he does not seek to deny the Army its "proper" influence. How this influence will express itself in the future remains to be seen, but there is little doubt that it will be less weighty and less powerful than it was during Zhukov's short-lived tenure as head and spokesman of the Soviet armed forces.

[4] It is significant that Khrushchev's economic decentralization plan, as finally adopted, made a conspicuous exception of defense industry, administration of which has been still further centralized in the Ministry of Defense Industry. This exception was not contained in Khrushchev's original proposal.

Cults of Personalities and the Soviet Cinema

Let us take, for instance, our historical and military films . . . they make us feel sick . . . . Let us recall the film, "The Fall of Berlin." Here only Stalin acts; he issues orders in the hall in which there are many empty chairs. . . . And where is the military command? Where is the Political Bureau? Where is the Government? What are they doing and with what are they engaged? There is nothing about them in the film. Stalin acts for everybody; he does not reckon with anyone; he asks no one for advice. Everything is shown to the nation in this false light. Why? In order to surround Stalin with glory, contrary to the facts and contrary to historical truth.

—From Khrushchev's speech at the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU, February 25, 1956.

Comrade Zhukov had a hand also in the script of the film "The Stalingrad Battle." In the new version of this film . . . everything related to the Stalin cult has been removed, but Zhukov occupies an utterly undeserved place. In the text of the film . . . appear words, personally introduced by Zhukov, that the planning and preparation of the Stalingrad offensive operation were directed by the Deputy Supreme Commander, Army General Zhukov, and also the representative of Headquarters, Colonel General Vasilevsky. Scenes picturing Zhukov in battles near Moscow and Berlin were included in this film artificially and without any connection with events.

—From a statement by Marshal Ivan S. Konev published in Pravda, November 3, 1957.

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East Germany's Intellectuals—A Note

By F. L. Carsten

THE SOVIET ZONE of Germany has been noticeably less affected by post-Stalin liberalization trends than any other country in the Soviet orbit. Walter Ulbricht, who was brought back from Moscow in a Soviet plane following the Nazi collapse, has remained firmly in the political saddle ever since he became secretary of the Communist "Socialist Unity Party" (SED) in 1950, and his power has been newly reaffirmed by the kiss bestowed on him by Khrushchev during the latter's recent visit to East Berlin. There could be no more obedient servant of Soviet interests, no one more willing to trim his sails to the slightest breeze blowing from Moscow. His blind imitation of everything Soviet, his narrow-minded and authoritarian attitude even toward his own collaborators and subordinates, and his complete ignorance and contempt for anything intellectual have had a particularly blighting effect on all aspects of East German life. These traits were apparent long ago. In the period of the popular front against Nazi terror, the prominent German left-wing writer, Heinrich Mann, remarked with regard to Ulbricht that it was impossible to deal with a man who would declare a table to be a duck-pond and demand that others subscribe to his assertion.

With such a man at the helm, it is not surprising that the regime's policies *vis-a-vis* intellectuals are at once uncompromisingly Stalinist and reminiscent of the equally oppressive attitudes of nazism. This is best illustrated in the literary field by the fact that an almost total unknown named Kurt Barthel (who uses the pseudonym of Kuba) was made secretary general of the Writers' Association and honored with a "national prize" for his ode to the executed Communist leader, Ernst Thaelmann, ending in the words:

Thaelmann und Thaelmann vor allen,
Deutschlands unsterblicher Sohn,
Thaelmann ist niemals gefallen,
Stimme und Faust der Nation.

(Thaelmann and Thaelmann before all others, Germany's immortal son, Thaelmann did not die but lives on, the voice and fist of the nation.)

But it is not only in its officially-sponsored "poetry" that the Communist regime has revived the spirit of the Nazis' Horst Wessel. When unrest broke out among the students of Berlin University in response to the Polish and Hungarian revolts of late 1956, Kurt Hager, a secretary of the SED Central Committee, threatened before the assembled senate of the university that he would mobilize the party's combat groups and have the students "knocked to pieces"—tantamount to a re-enactment of the terrorism of Hitler's "brownshirts."[1] Such threats, however, have only served to fan the smoldering fires of protest among students and intellectuals —the latter including some leading Communist scholars— against the regime's ignorant intolerance and attempts to suppress all critical discussion.

THE SPECTACULAR repudiation of Stalinism by the Twentieth CPSU Congress had inspired fresh hopes in intellectual circles for a relaxation and for a change in the policy and leadership of the SED. The shattering of these hopes was profoundly disillusioning, and the ferment in the student and intellectual ranks reached new heights under the impact of events in Poland and Hungary. There were close contacts between some German writers and the Petoefi Club in Budapest, as well as between German and Polish intellectuals. At the universities students were demanding fewer lectures on Marxism-Leninism, an end to the compulsory teaching of Russian (as in Hungary), reestablishment of independent student associations, and termination of the organizational monopoly enjoyed by the Communist Free German Youth. Soviet suppression of the revolt in Hungary evoked widespread expressions of sympathy for the Hungarian people; numerous meetings took place at which silence was observed in honor of the Hungarian dead; students at Halle printed leaflets supporting the Hungarian fight for freedom and destroyed portraits of Ulbricht; Dresden high-school students distributed handbills urging workers to strike in sympathy with Hungary; and in Berlin itself meetings were organized to voice student demands.

There were other developments of still greater significance. Within the SED dissident elements formed an opposition group aiming at replacement of the Stalinist party leadership and seeking to establish contact with similarly-inclined Communist groups in other countries of the Soviet bloc. By wresting control away from Stalinists of the Ulbricht type, the oppositionists hoped to pave the way for a far-reaching reform of the party from the inside. They adhered to Marxism-Leninism as their point of departure but wanted to broaden this theoretical base by absorbing in it some of the concepts of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Kautsky, of Trotsky and Bukharin; they also favored borrowing from the experience of Yugoslavia, particularly in regard to workers' councils, and from Polish and Chinese discussions

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[1] Hager's declaration is quoted in an article by Alfred Kantorowicz, "Warum Ich Ging" (Why I Left), *Die Zeit* (West Berlin), September 19, 1957.

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of their own "paths to socialism." They demanded dissolution of the collective farms in order to avert a catastrophe in agriculture, and abolition of the State Security Service (political police) and of all secret trials and interrogations. Above all, they insisted upon a specifically German "road to socialism," denying the validity of Soviet experience as a universal model; and they accused the Soviet Union of exploiting the "People's Democracies" and denying them equality and national independence. Finally they envisaged cooperation with the West German Social Democrats looking toward eventual reunification of the German working-class movement and of Germany as a whole.[2]

IT IS NOT known how strong this opposition group was, or whether it had any chance of achieving its rather utopian aims. The regime, however, evidently considered it enough of a potential danger to warrant the arrest of its alleged leader, Professor Wolfgang Harich, a Marxist philosopher and editor of a scholarly periodical. He was arrested at the end of 1956 and sentenced in March 1957 to ten years' penal servitude, two other co-defendants receiving shorter terms. Four more members of the group were tried in July and sentenced to long prison terms. In this second trial, the public prosecutor himself stressed the similarity of the oppositionists' demands to those put forward in Hungary, especially by the Petoefi Club, whose members Professor Harich had met while lecturing in Budapest.[3] Interestingly enough, one of the witnesses in the second trial (but not in the first) was Paul Merker, a former leading Communist who had been deprived of his party standing in 1950 on charges of oppositional activities connected with the Noel Field case. Merker's testimony revealed that he had been in contact with members of the Harich group, and that the latter had approached other prominent party figures believed to hold views in opposition to the Stalinist party leadership.

The regime's harsh reprisals against the principals involved in the Harich "conspiracy," however, have not silenced the intellectual voices of discontent. It was announced last July that a group supporting the platform of the Harich dissidents had been discovered at the University of Halle, and in October some students from Ilmenau were tried for organizing an underground group opposed to the regime. The signs of defection had repercussions in the SED Central Committee, where Minister of Culture Johannes R. Becher was sharply criticized in July for allowing "ideological peace" to reign in the universities and among writers and artists. The Committee attacked several prominent intellectuals by name: Hans Meyer, a professor of literature who had previously been the target of frequent criticisms by the party, again came under fire for defending "decadent bourgeois literature" and for belittling the new proletarian literature of Communist East Germany; several leading writers were also denounced because they had failed to dissociate themselves publicly from the famous Hungarian philosopher, Gyorgi Lukacs, following his arrest and deportation from Hungary.[4]

Particularly severe criticism was directed at another professor of literature, Alfred Kantorowicz, who had been a Communist from pre-Hitler days and had fought in Spain as an officer in the anti-fascist International Brigades. Kantorowicz had earned the enmity of the party leadership by daring to propose Lukacs as a candidate for the Nobel Prize for literature and refusing to put his name to a declaration of loyalty to Ulbricht which had been submitted to the presidium of the Writers' Association after the suppression of the Hungarian revolt. He had not joined any opposition group but had spoken out against the stupidities of the *apparatchiks*, the stifling of literary creativity, and the spirit of adulation and flattery prevailing in the party.

One month after the Central Committee's attack on himself and other dissident intellectuals, Kantorowicz defected to the West on August 22. In a series of three articles subsequently published in West Germany, he explained that he had quit the Communist zone because he felt that, if he stayed any longer, he would suffocate in the oppressive atmosphere created by the regime's insistence upon intellectual conformity.[5] His defection, however, seems far more likely to lead the East German leadership to intensify its oppression than to moderate its policies toward the intellectuals whom it so badly needs not only as university teachers but in other spheres of activity as well.

Dr. Wilhelm Girnus, a pre-1933 Communist well known for his blind loyalty to the party line, has been appointed Secretary of State charged with the particular duty of tightening controls over the universities. The attitude with which the students greeted this step was manifested by the fact that when Girnus went to address the student body of Berlin University, he found himself facing empty benches. Hostility toward the regime has been further augmented by Girnus' action prohibiting student travel to West Germany. Yet the intellectual critics of the regime have only two roads open to them if they wish to avoid sharing the fate of Professor Harich: either to resign and be silent in the hope that their silence will be taken for acquiescence; or to follow Professor Kantorowicz into political exile. Whichever road they choose, they cannot hope to influence the inflexibly Stalinist party leadership under Ulbricht to grant them a greater measure of intellectual liberty. Their unrest is bound to continue, but so will the regime's policies of terror and suppression.

[2] The full text of the oppositionist program was published in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, March 21, 1957. (An abridged English translation appeared in *The Observer* (London) March 17, 1957.)

[3] Trial reported in official SED organ, *Neues Deutschland*, July 26 and 27, 1957.

[4] The Central Committee's attacks on various intellectuals reported in *Frankfurter Rundschau*, July 22, 1957.

[5] Kantorowicz, *op. cit.* The articles appeared in three consecutive issues of *Die Zeit*, all during September 1957.

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